NEW AVENGERS®
A PERFECT WORLD
HICKMAN
MARVEL NOW!
SCHITI
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VOL 4

"The Illuminati aren't bad guys. They're good guys put in an impossible situation, but a situation that perfectly captures the grandeur and sci-fi insanity of super-hero comics."
— WeOfTheNerdOnline.com

IT'S THE BATTLE YOU DIDN'T KNOW YOU WANTED TO SEE — UNTIL NOW!

In all creation, only one Earth has met and triumphed over each Incursion that has threatened it: the Earth of the heroes of the Great Society! And guess which Earth is on a collision course with ours? Now, the New Avengers must take on the combined power of the Great Society — and only one parallel Earth can survive! But how far is Dr. Strange willing to go to protect the Marvel Universe? Which New Avenger will find the strength to press the button that destroys a world? And what will come in the aftermath? As the Illuminati shatters under the weight of an exploding planet, follow the broken would-be world-savers through their last day on Earth.

Collecting *New Avengers (2013) #18-23* — written by Jonathan Hickman, and illustrated by Valerio Schiti and Kev Walker.

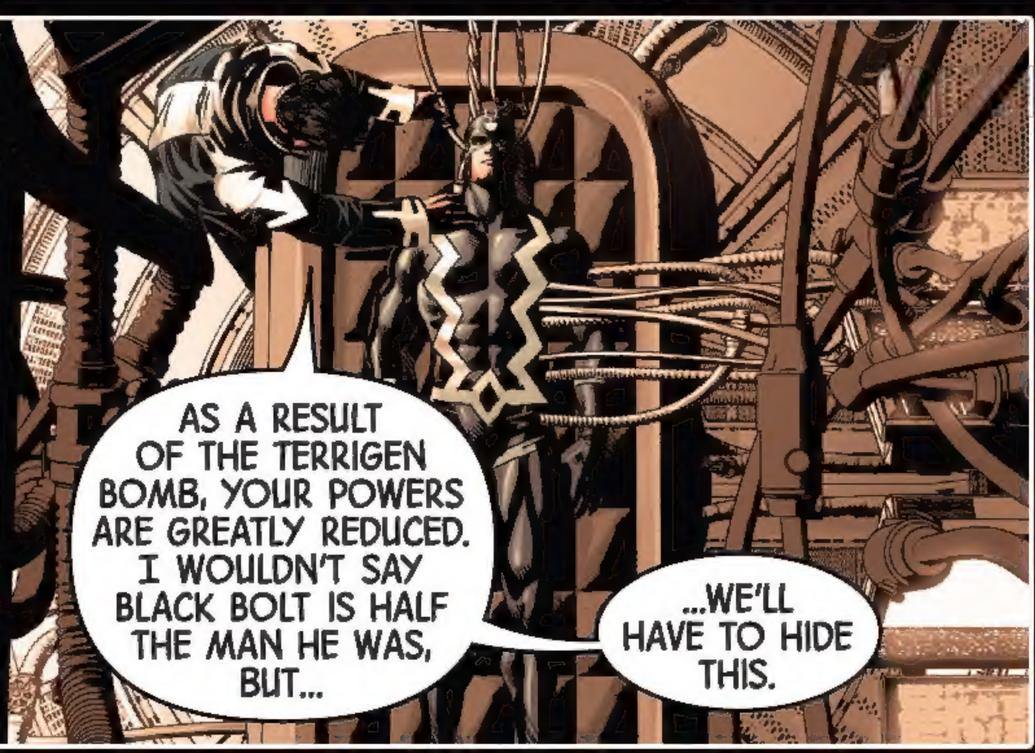
T+ MARVEL

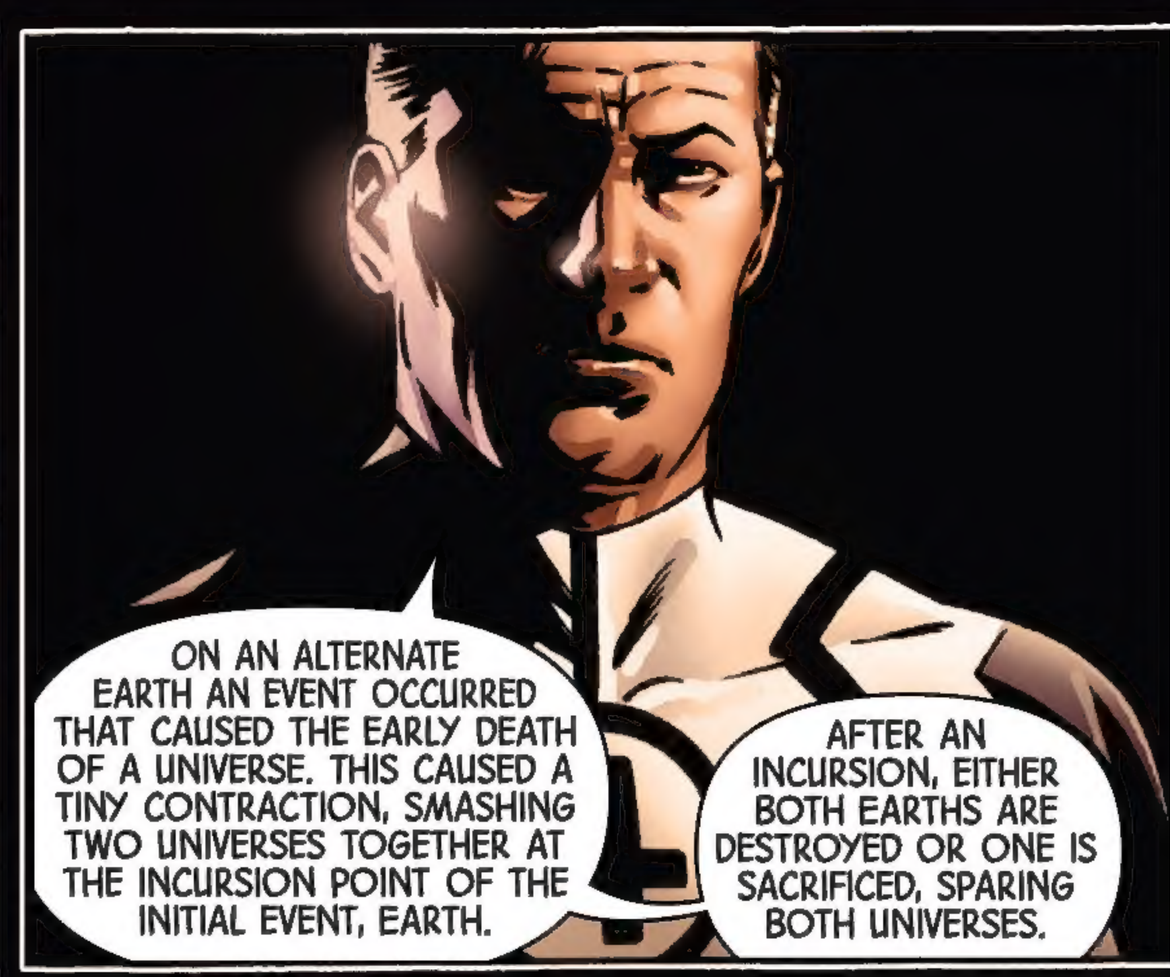
ALL-NEW MARVEL NOW!

HICKMAN
SCHITI
MARTIN

018

PREVIOUSLY IN NEW AVENGERS





CO

"INTO THE BREACH"

WRITER: JONATHAN HICKMAN
ARTIST: VALERIO SCHITI

COLOR ARTIST: FRANK MARTIN
LETTERER: VC's JOE CARAMAGNA
COVER ART: DUSTIN WEAVER & JASON KEITH
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THE ILLUMINATI

BLACK BOLT
Celestial Messiah

NAMOR
Imperius Rex

REED RICHARDS
Universal Builder

IRON MAN
Master of Machines

BEAST
Mutant Genius

DOCTOR STRANGE
Sorcerer Supreme

BLACK PANTHER
King of the Dead

HULK/BRUCE BANNER
Strongest There Is

BLACK SWAN
Incursion Survivor

MAXIMUS
Inhuman Madman

BOUNDLESS

DR. SPECTRUM

SUN GOD

THE RIDER

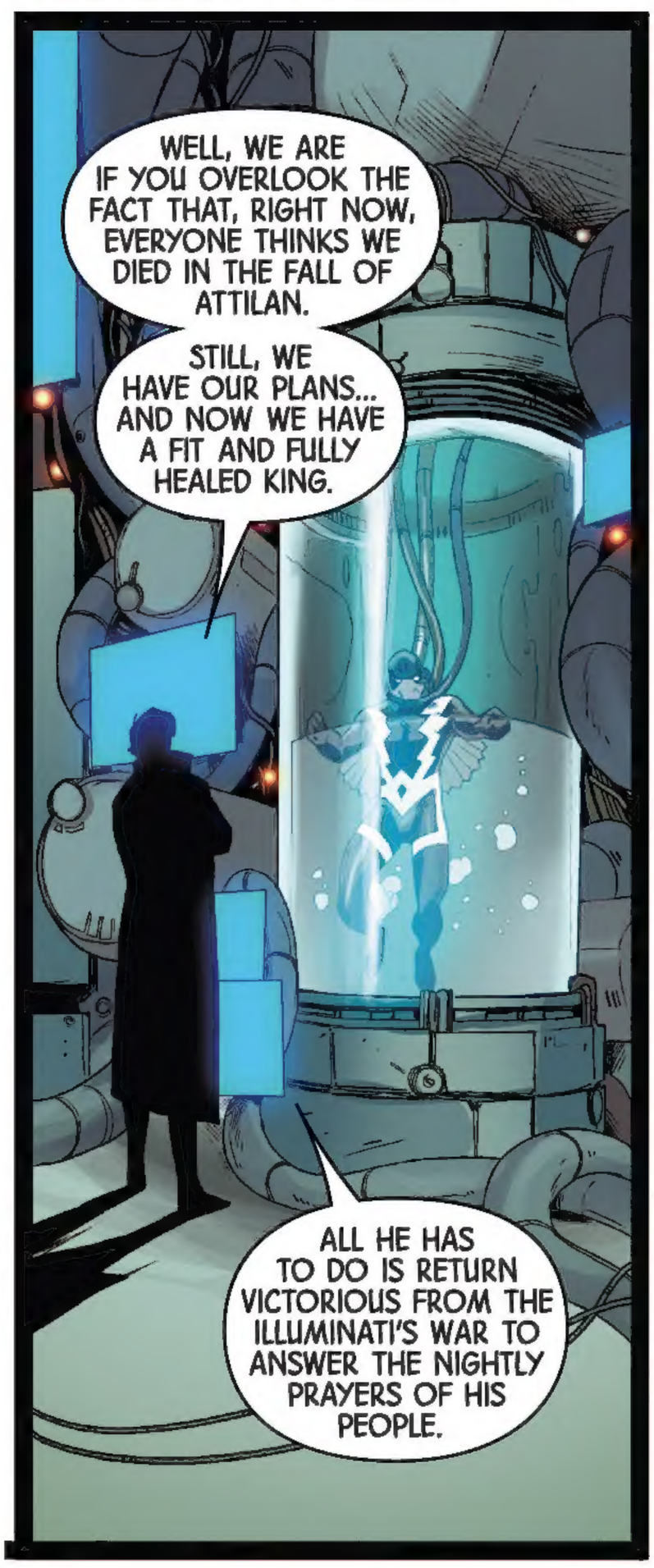
THE JOVIAN

THE NORN

BLACK BOLT IS HEALING.

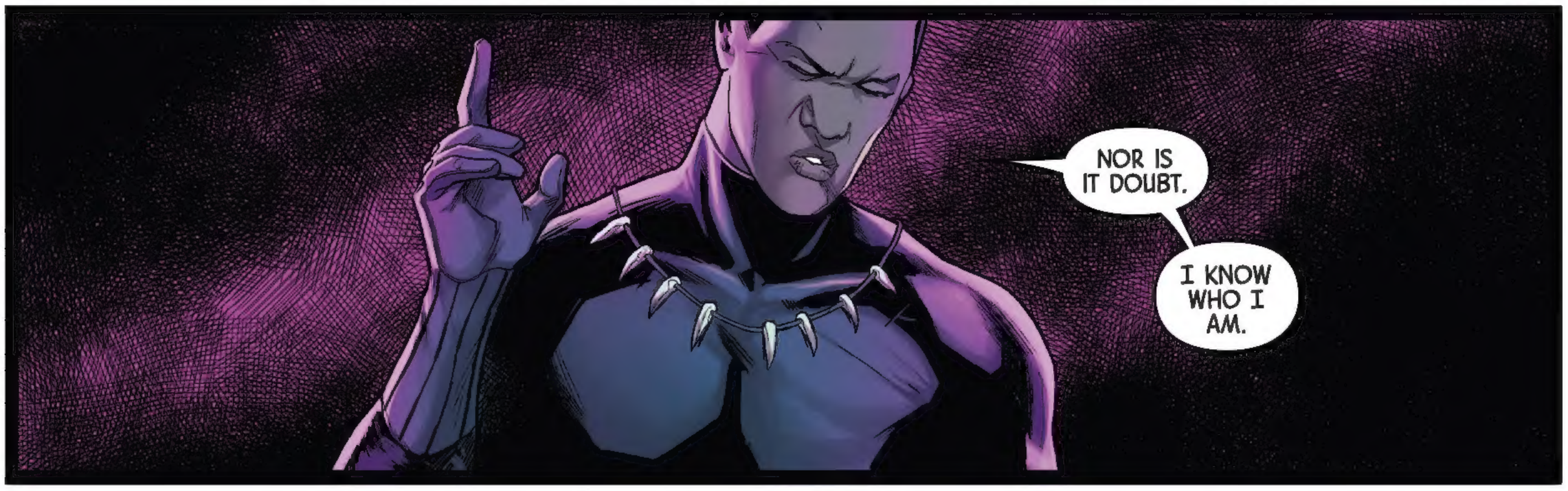
RIGHT NOW, EVEN AS WE WATCH, SCARRED AND DAMAGED TISSUE IS BEING REGENERATED IN THOSE EXOGENETICALLY CHARGED WATERS.
WOOF!
YES, OF COURSE IT HURTS--RAPID HEALING ALWAYS HAS A COST...NOT THAT OUR KING HASN'T ALWAYS BEEN SOMETHING OF A MASOCHIST.

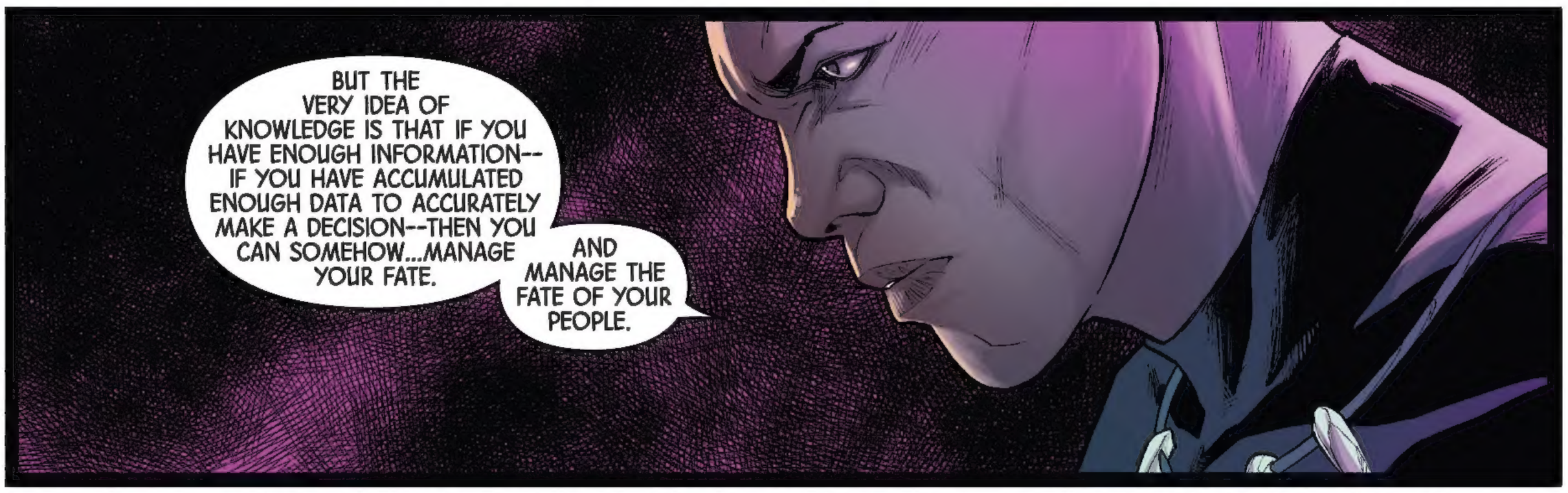
MY BROTHER, YOU SEE--THE CELESTIAL MESSIAH--HUNG HIMSELF ON THE CROSS SO THAT OUR PEOPLE MIGHT BE SAVED THROUGH GLOBAL TERRIGENESIS.
AND NOW WE'RE ALL ONE HAPPY UNIVERSAL FAMILY OF INHUMANS.


WELL, WE ARE IF YOU OVERLOOK THE FACT THAT, RIGHT NOW, EVERYONE THINKS WE DIED IN THE FALL OF ATTILAN.
STILL, WE HAVE OUR PLANS... AND NOW WE HAVE A FIT AND FULLY HEALED KING.
ALL HE HAS TO DO IS RETURN VICTORIOUS FROM THE ILLUMINATI'S WAR TO ANSWER THE NIGHTLY PRAYERS OF HIS PEOPLE.

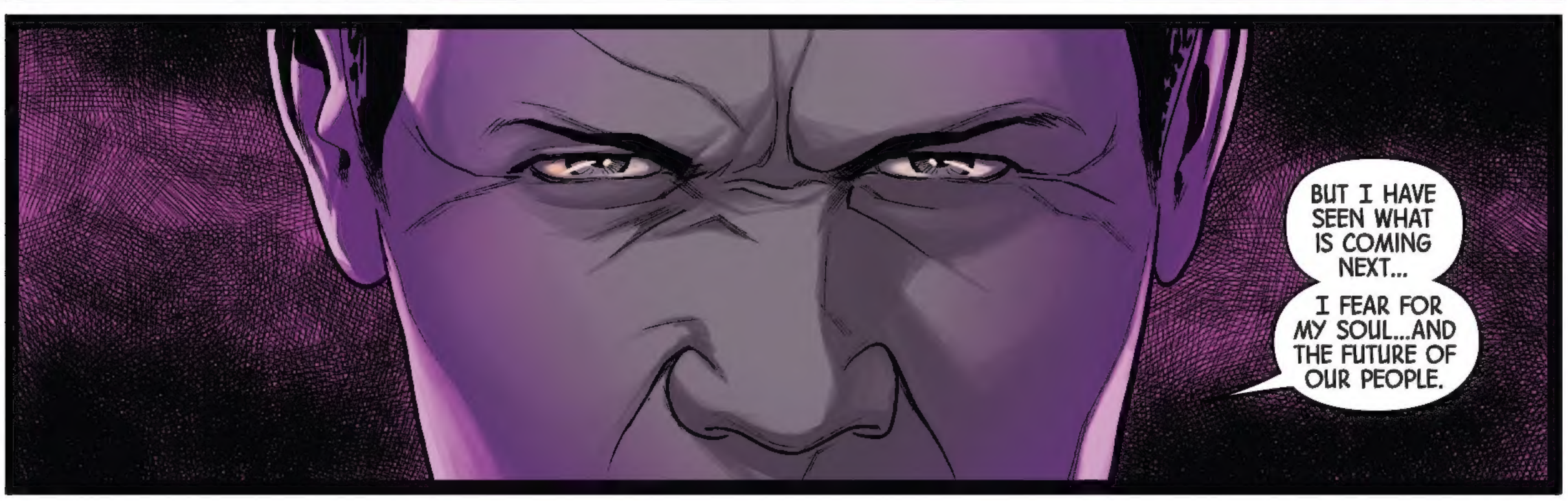
THEY WILL ACCEPT OUR RESURRECTION WITH OPEN ARMS...
FOR WHAT SANE PERSON WANTS TO COMMUNE WITH THE DEAD?

WAKANDA.
THE NECROPOLIS.
IT'S NOT WEAKNESS.
IT'S NOT.


NOR IS IT DOUBT.
I KNOW WHO I AM.


BUT THE VERY IDEA OF KNOWLEDGE IS THAT IF YOU HAVE ENOUGH INFORMATION--IF YOU HAVE ACCUMULATED ENOUGH DATA TO ACCURATELY MAKE A DECISION--THEN YOU CAN SOMEHOW...MANAGE YOUR FATE.
AND MANAGE THE FATE OF YOUR PEOPLE.

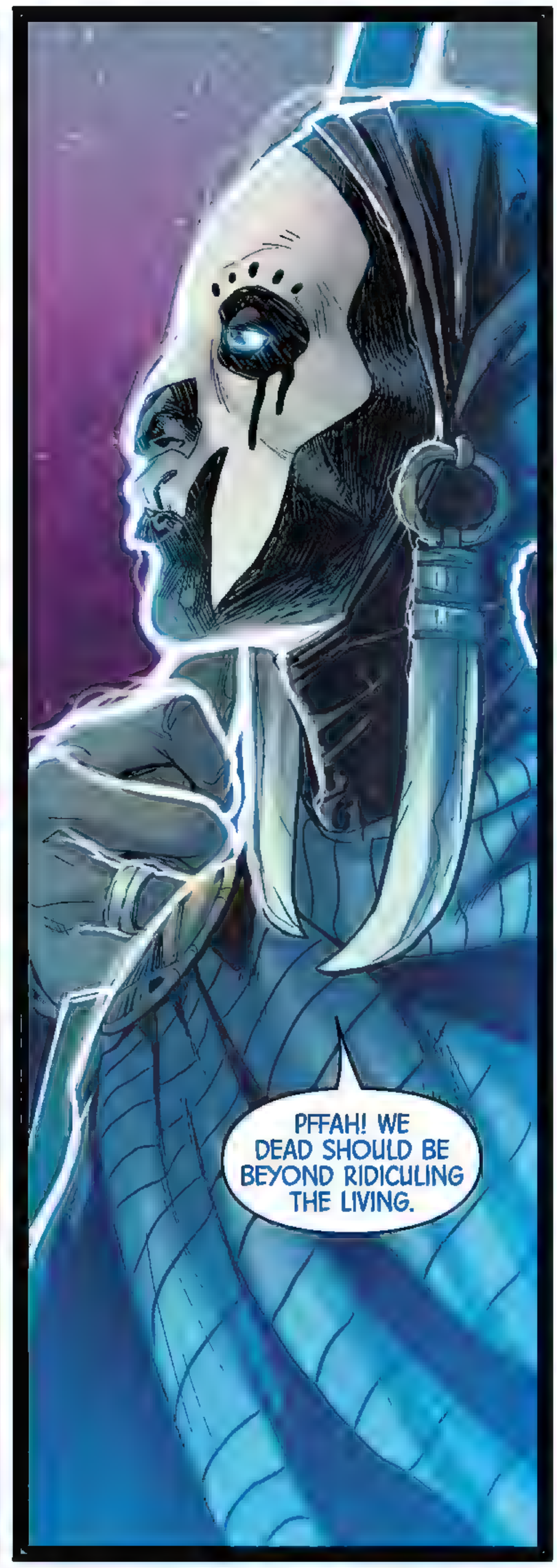
SO I THOUGHT KNOWING WHAT WE WERE UP AGAINST WOULD, IN SOME MANNER, MAKE THINGS EASIER...
MOVE ALL THIS--WHAT WE MUST DO--PAST THE HOPE AND LUCK ON WHICH WE HAVE SUSTAINED OURSELVES TO SOMETHING FIRMER.


BUT I HAVE SEEN WHAT IS COMING NEXT...
I FEAR FOR MY SOUL...AND THE FUTURE OF OUR PEOPLE.

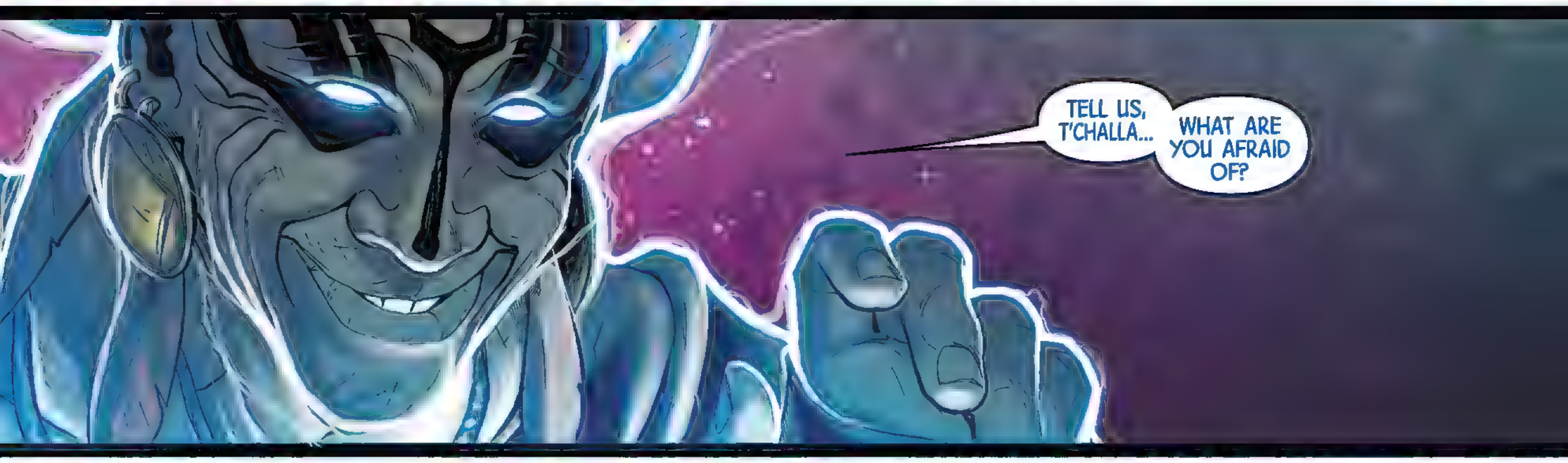
SO I SEEK YOUR COUNSEL...
HONORED FATHERS, WARRIORS AND PRIESTS.
BLACK PANTHERS ALL.

YOU CAN SPEAK PLAINLY, T'CHALLA...
THERE IS NO NEED FOR SUCH FORMALITY... OR SUBTLETY.
AFTER ALL, ARE WE NOT NOW ALL ONE?

BUT LOOK IN THOSE EYES, THE BOY KING HAS SEEN SOMETHING THAT'S SHAMED HIM...
HAVE YOU BEEN WEEPING, PRINCE?


PFFAH! WE DEAD SHOULD BE BEYOND RIDICULING THE LIVING.

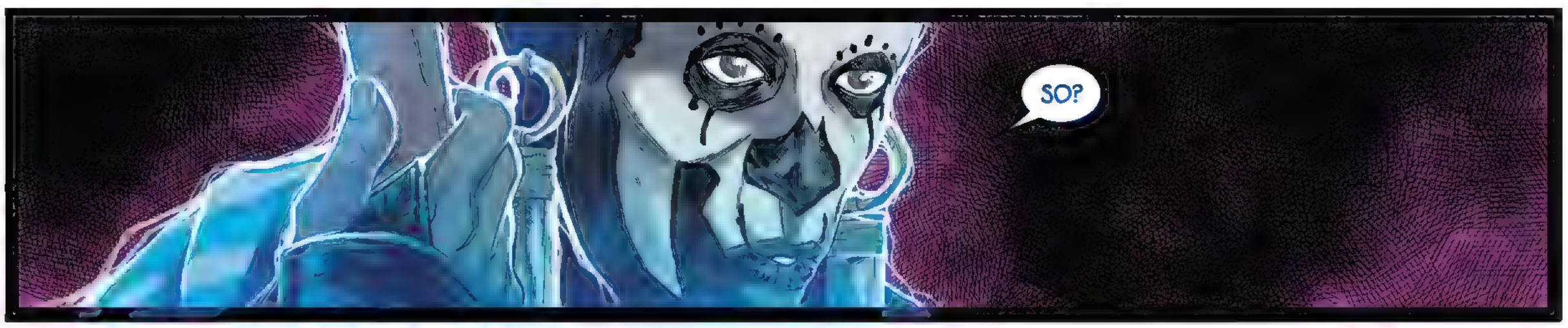
AND YET HERE I AM...AS I AM, HUNTING BONES LIKE THE REST OF YOU.

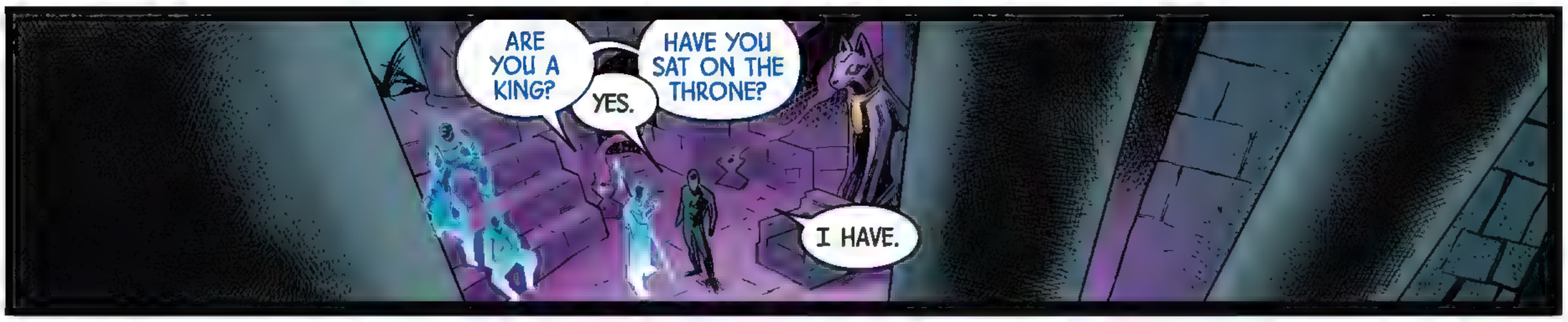

TELL US, T'CHALLA...
WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?

IN THE NEXT HOUR THERE WILL BE ANOTHER INCURSION.

THE WORLD WE WILL FACE IS DEFENDED BY GOOD--POSSIBLY GREAT--MEN AND WOMEN OF SIGNIFICANT POWER.

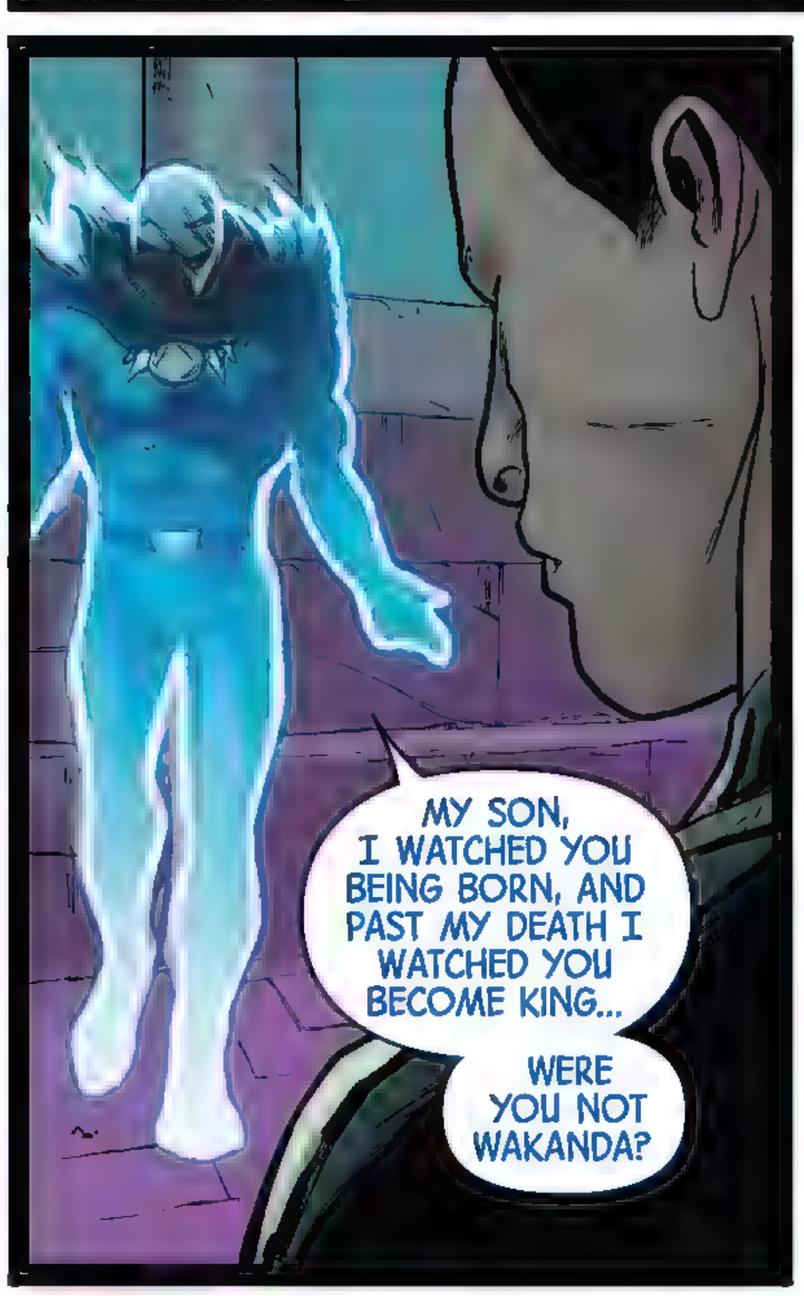
I HAVE OBSERVED THEM, AND THEY ARE CRAFTY, BEYOND CAPABLE...AND OF THE HIGHEST QUALITY.




ARE YOU A KING?
YES.
HAVE YOU SAT ON THE THRONE?
I HAVE.

THEN YOU HAVE DONE EVIL. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PLACE YOURSELF--OR BE PLACED--ABOVE MAN AND NOT ACT AS A GOD.
AND BY "GOD," I MEAN ONE WHO IS BEYOND HUMAN MORALITY. BEYOND THE PRICE THAT MAN'S JUSTICE DEMANDS FOR IMMORAL ACTS.

I WAS A GOOD KING.

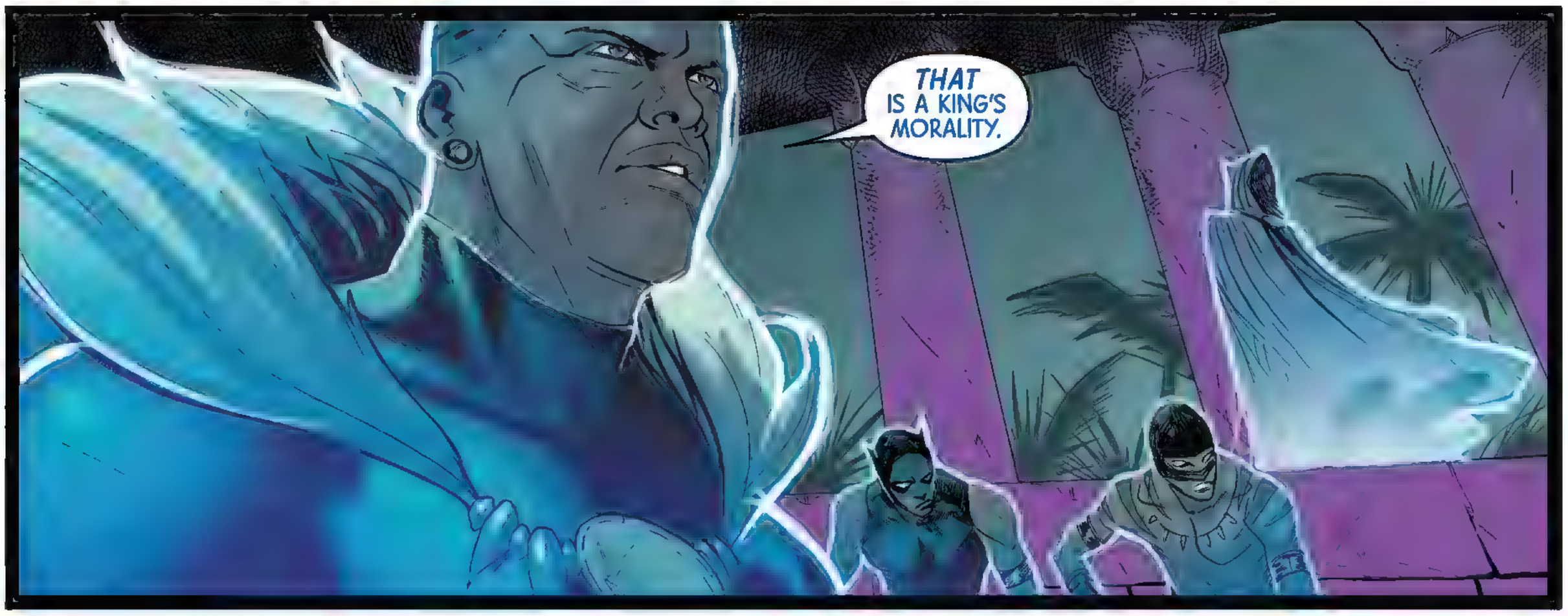

MY SON, I WATCHED YOU BEING BORN, AND PAST MY DEATH I WATCHED YOU BECOME KING...
WERE YOU NOT WAKANDA?

I WAS, FATHER.

"THEN YOU KNOW--THE GREAT GOLDEN CITY, GREATER THAN ANY OTHER IN THE WORLD...

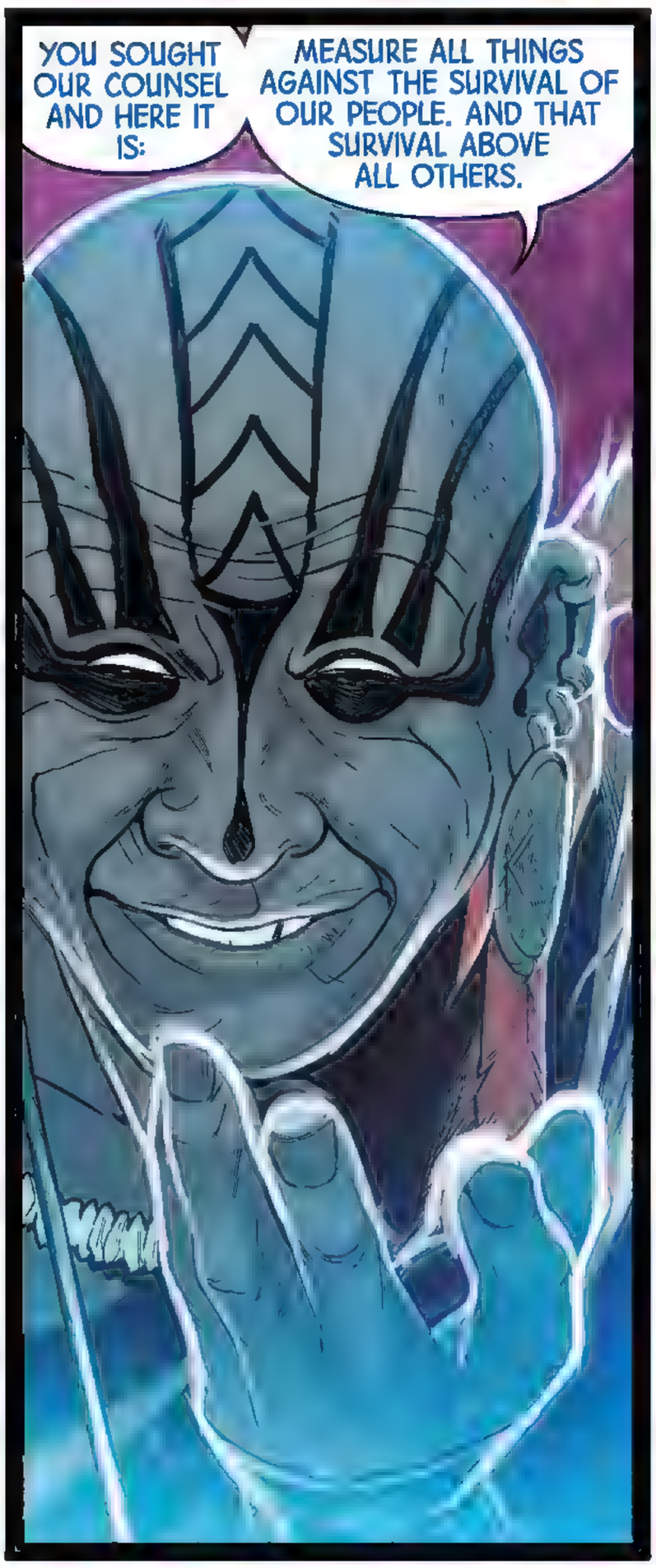
"HOW MANY COULD WE HAVE HELPED--HOW MANY COULD WE HAVE SAVED--IF WE CHOSE NOT TO BE HIDDEN... NOT TO BE SET APART?

"MANY TIMES BECAUSE WE DID NOTHING, MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN DIED...
"AND WE DID THIS BECAUSE IT WAS BEST FOR OUR PEOPLE AND WAKANDA."

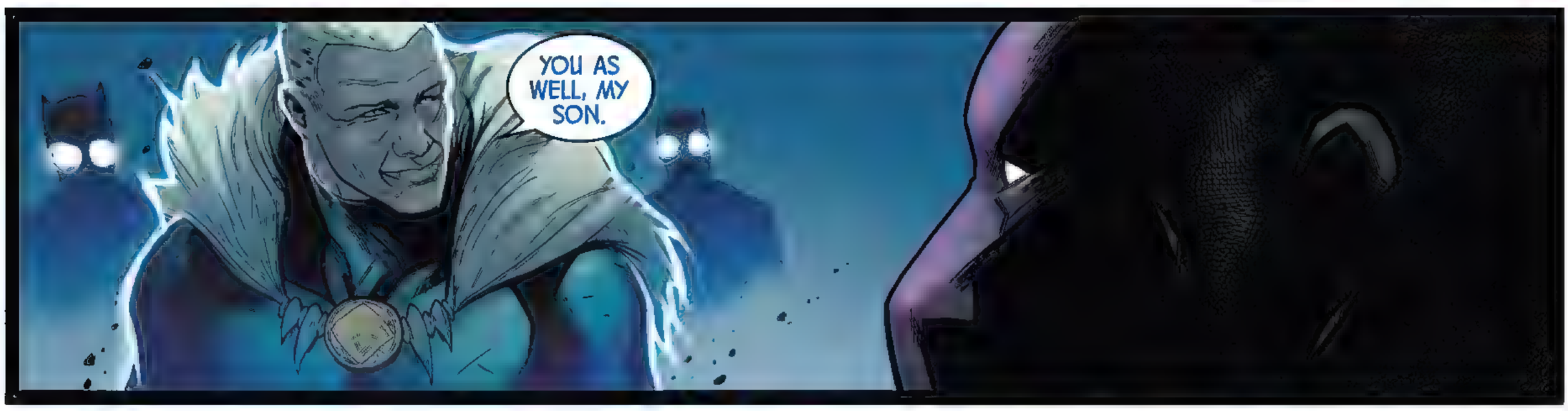

THAT IS A KING'S MORALITY.

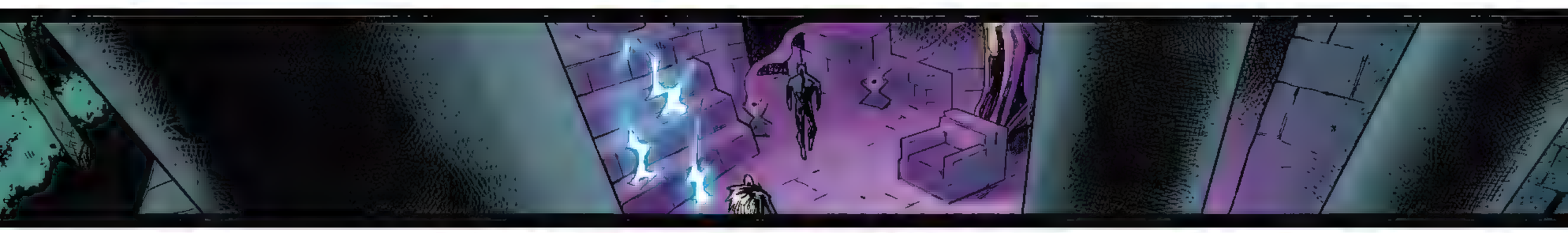
WE HAVE ALL MADE IMPOSSIBLE CHOICES LIKE THE ONES FACING YOU.

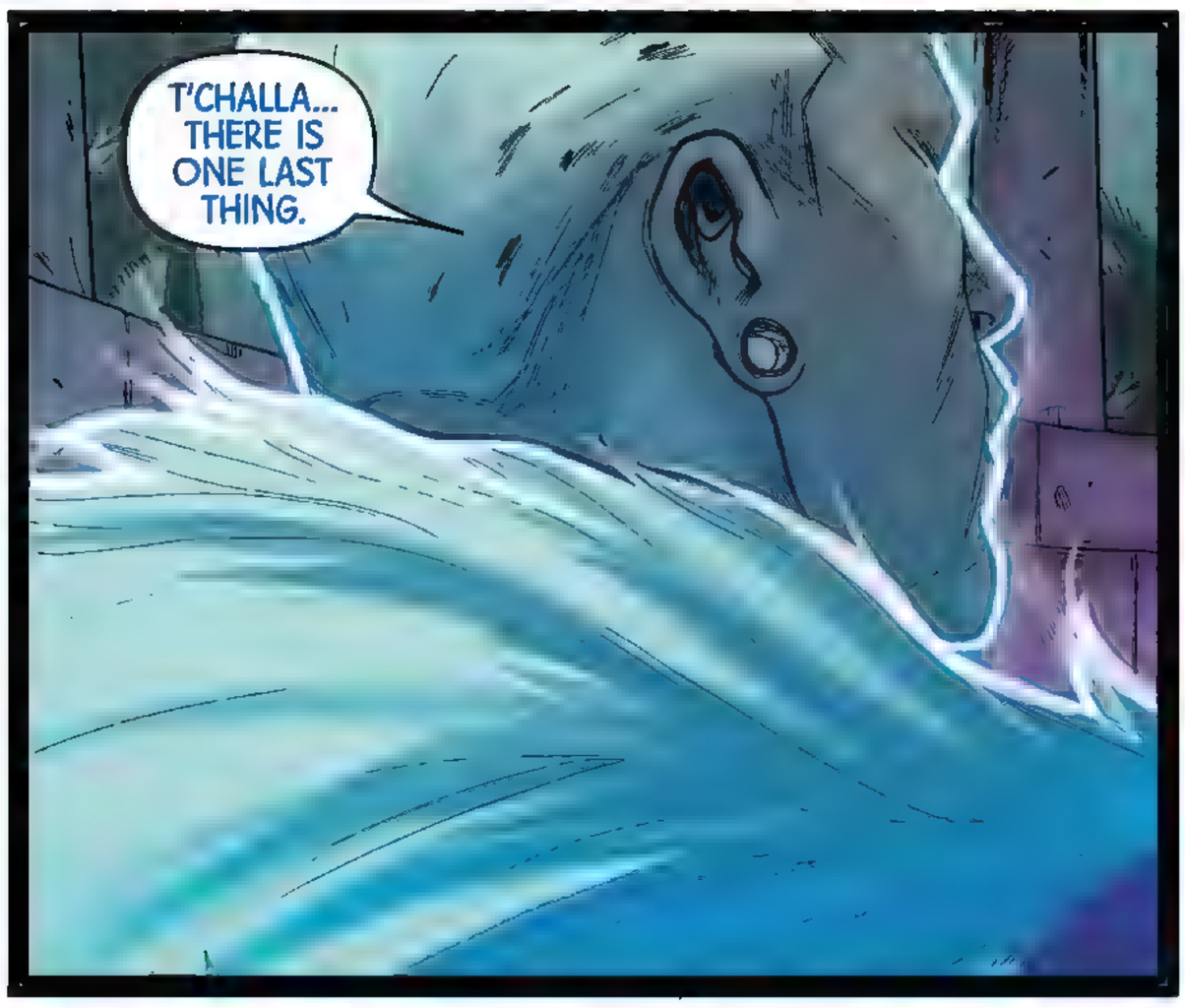
BUT WE SHOULDER THEM AS WE SHOULD... IT IS OUR BURDEN.



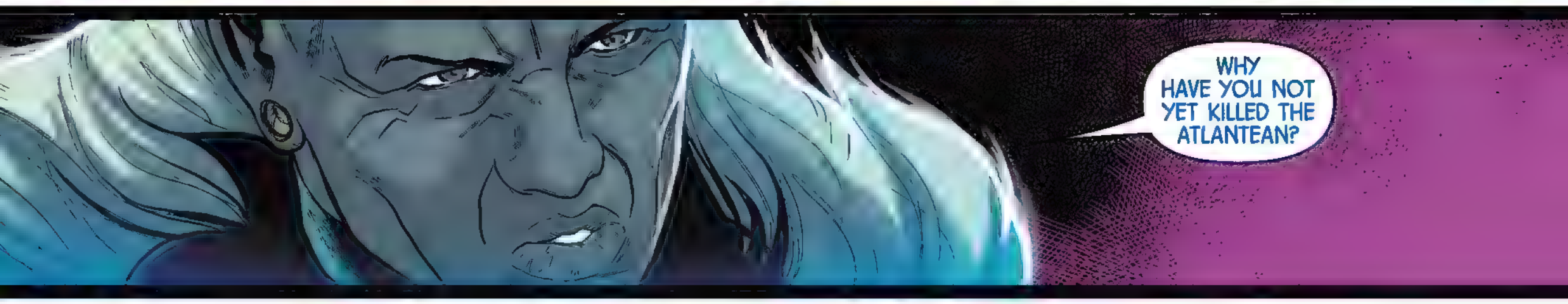
GOOD HUNTING IN THE HEAVENS, WARRIORS.


YOU AS WELL, MY SON.

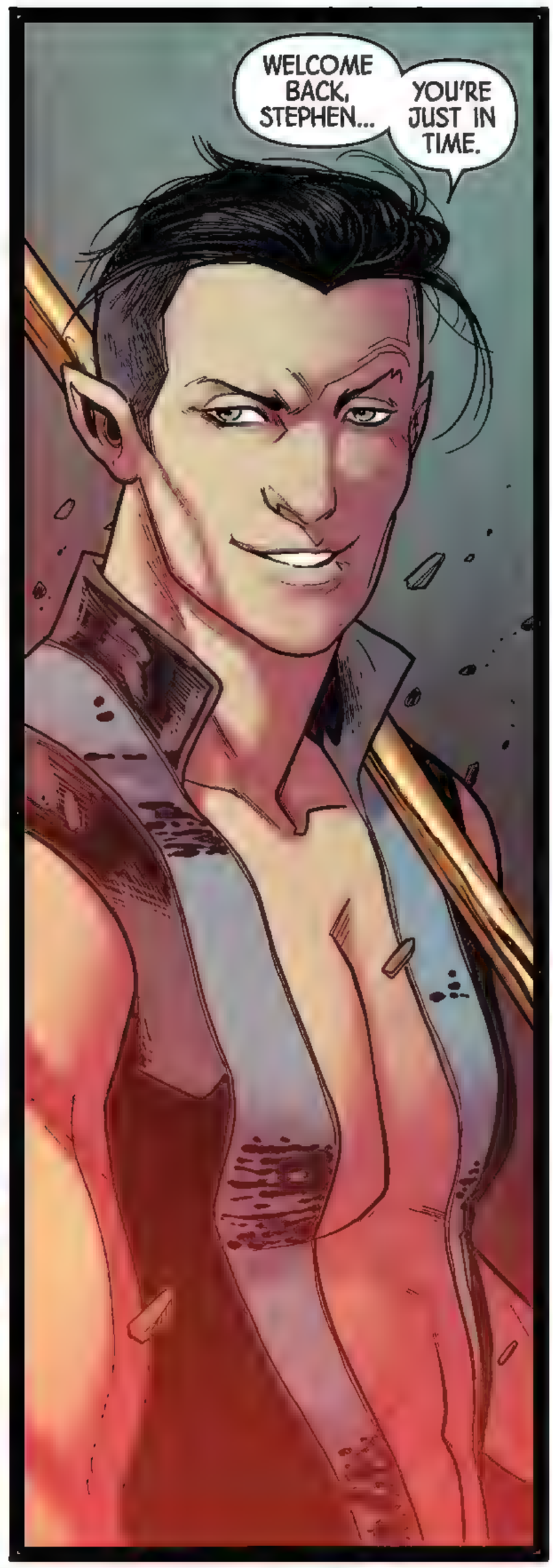


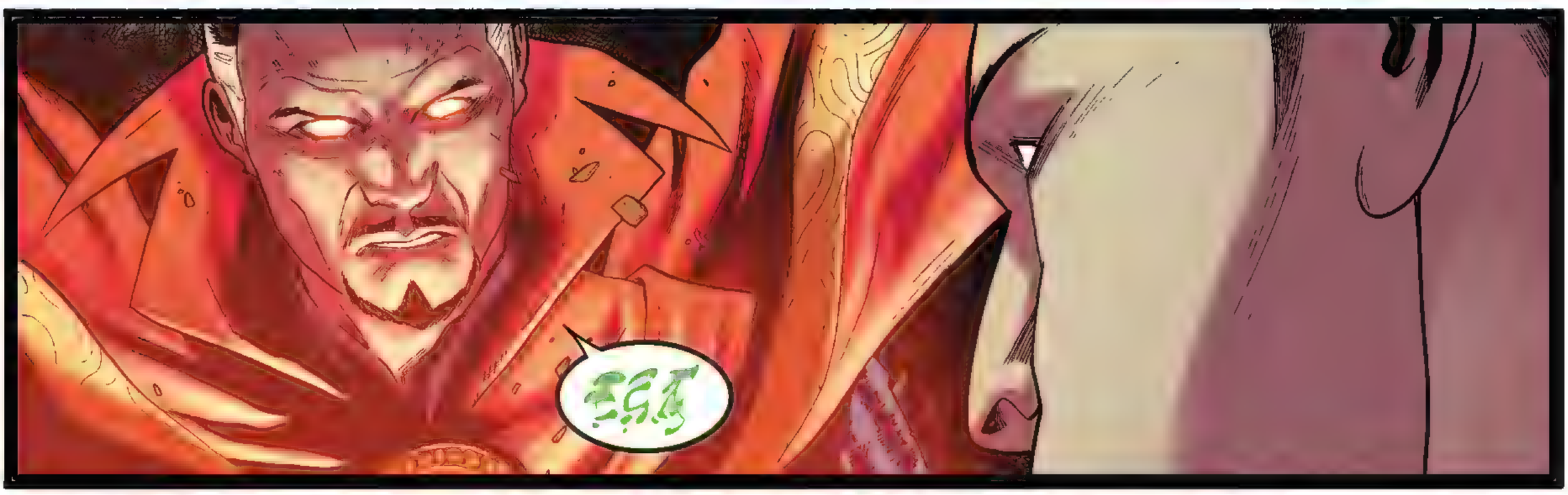

T'CHALLA... THERE IS ONE LAST THING.

YES, FATHER?

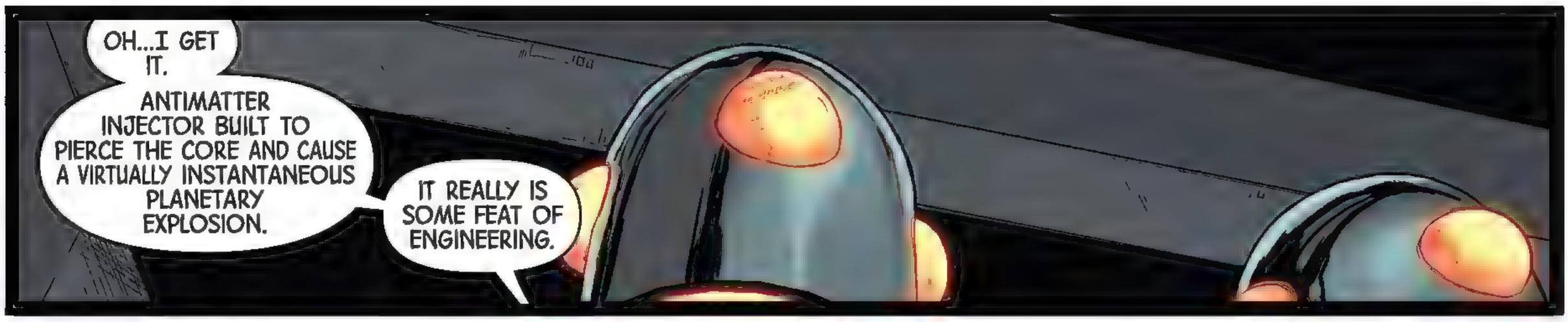

WHY HAVE YOU NOT YET KILLED THE ATLANTEAN?

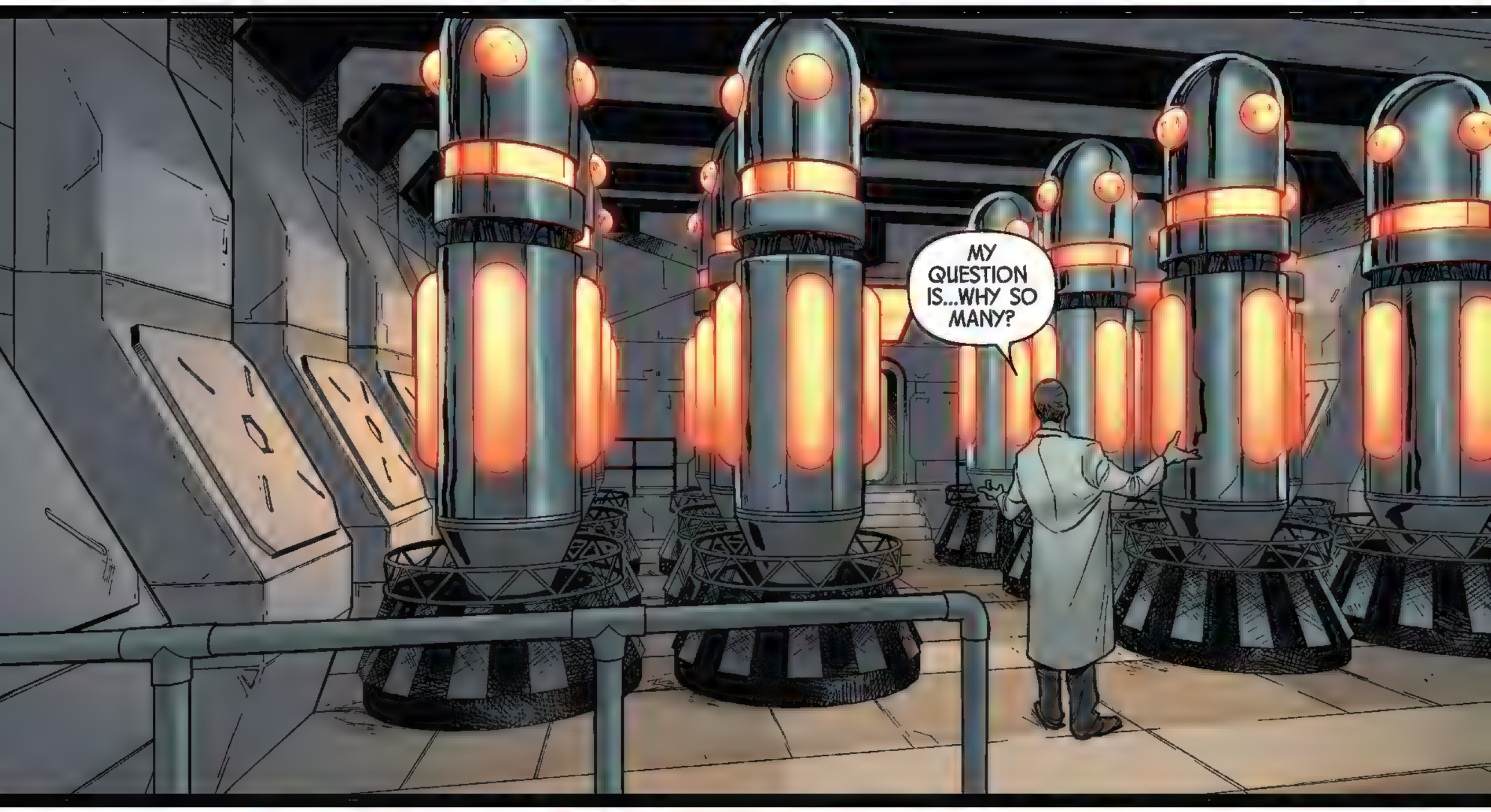
SKRITCH!
SKRITCH!
WASSHH!

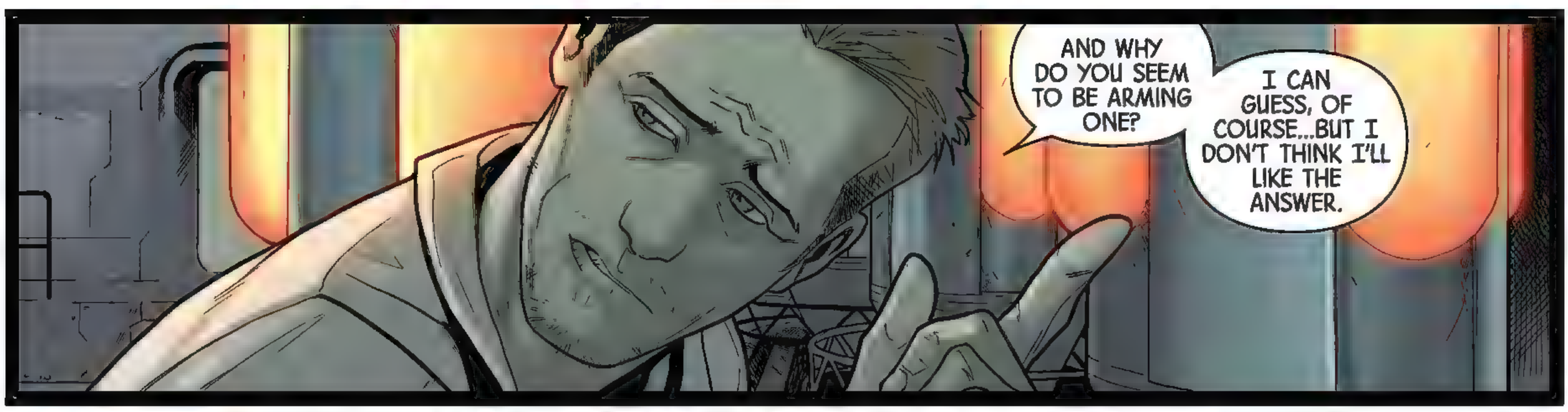

WELCOME BACK, STEPHEN...
YOU'RE JUST IN TIME.


ZZZZ

WELL...DON'T *YOU* LOOK LIKE A MAN WHO'S JUST HAD AN EXPERIENCE?

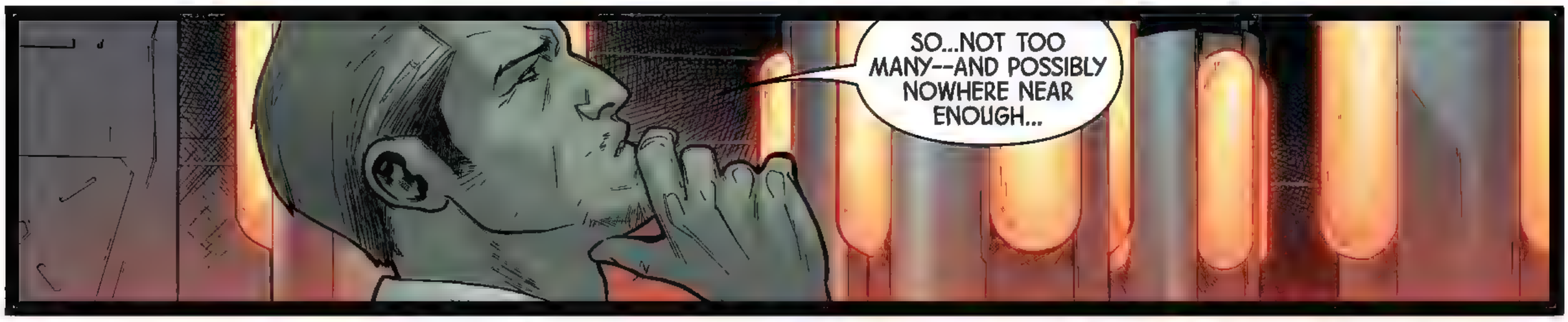

OH...I GET IT.
ANTIMATTER INJECTOR BUILT TO PIERCE THE CORE AND CAUSE A VIRTUALLY INSTANTANEOUS PLANETARY EXPLOSION.
IT REALLY IS SOME FEAT OF ENGINEERING.


MY QUESTION IS...WHY SO MANY?

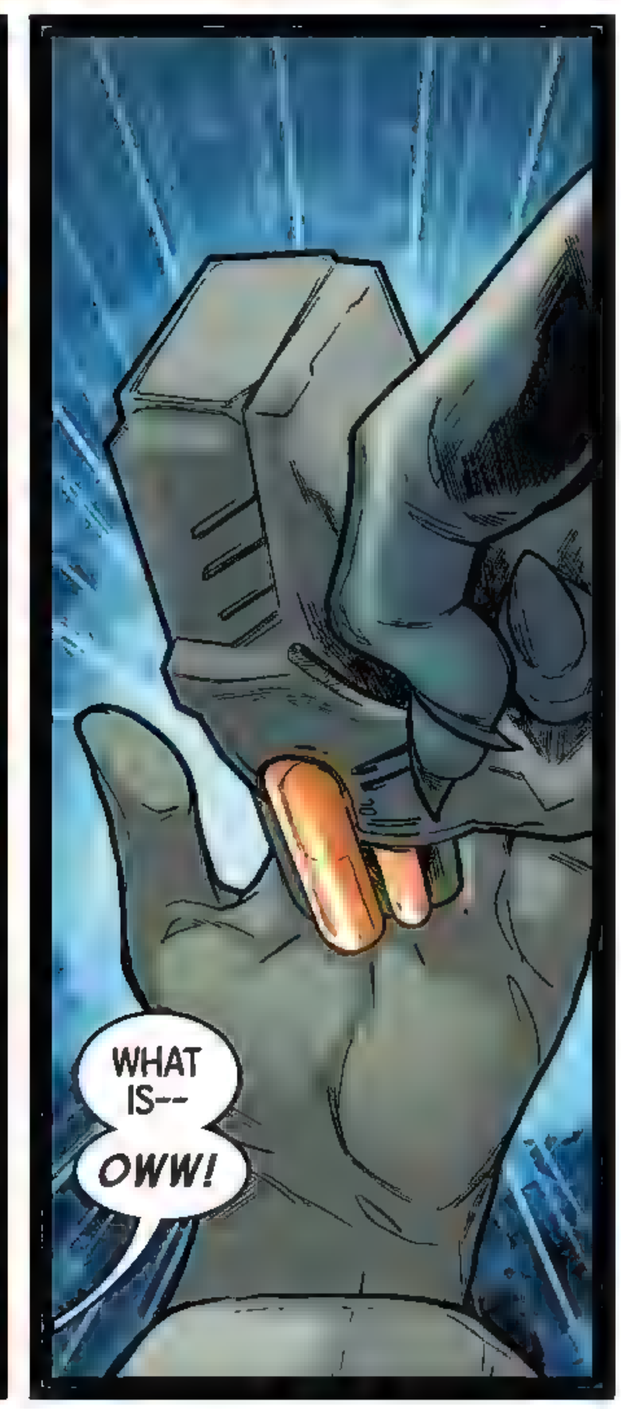

AND WHY DO YOU SEEM TO BE ARMING ONE?
I CAN GUESS, OF COURSE...BUT I DON'T THINK I'LL LIKE THE ANSWER.

NO ONE DOES, DOCTOR BANNER.
AND FORGIVE MY OUT-OF-CHARACTER BLUNTNESS AS I EXPAND ON THE THEME...

BUT I KNOW ANTHONY DIDN'T BRING YOU IN WITHOUT EXPLAINING THAT THE PROBLEM ISN'T A SINGLE END-TIMES SCENARIO REQUIRING A ONE-TIME SUPER-GENIUS SOLUTION.
IT'S A *VARIATION* OF THAT IMPOSSIBLE PROBLEM AN *INFINITE NUMBER* OF TIMES.


SO...NOT TOO MANY--AND POSSIBLY NOWHERE NEAR ENOUGH...

HANK, I THINK YOU PEOPLE NEED SOME BETTER SOLUTIONS.
LIKE A DROWNING MAN NEEDS AIR. WHY ELSE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE HERE, DOCTOR BANNER?
I NEED TO SEE YOUR HAND, PLEASE.

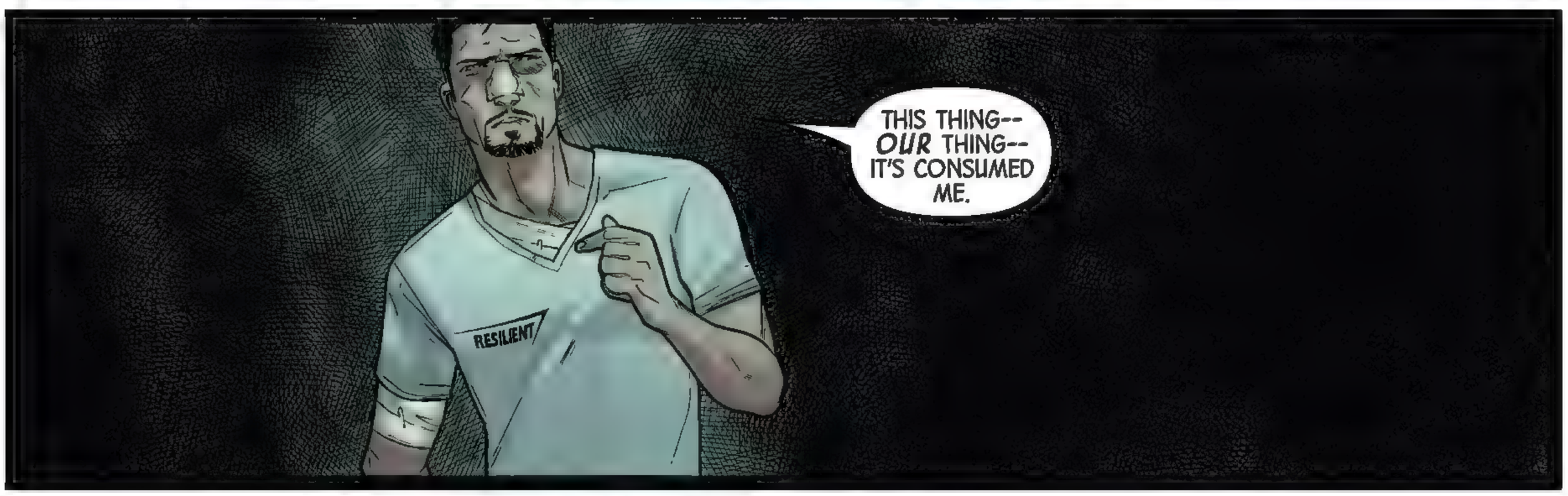

WHAT IS--
OWW!

IT'S OUR NEWEST VERSION OF OUR TRANSLOCATOR/ INCURSION CLOCK. LETS YOU KNOW WHEN THE END OF THE WORLD IS NIGH, AND GETS YOU THERE QUICK AS CAN BE.
WHY IS IT FLASHING?

THAT...IS THE ANSWER TO YOUR EARLIER QUERY:
WHY IS IT THAT THE GOOD DOCTOR McCOY WAS ARMING A BOMB?

I'VE GOT A PROBLEM.

ACTUALLY, I HAVE *LOTS* OF PROBLEMS. WHAT I MEAN IS, I HAVE A CERTAIN SHORTCOMING:
AN IDEA GETS STUCK IN MY HEAD-- A BUG CRAWLS IN MY EAR--AND IT INFECTS MY THINKING. IT DOESN'T STOP UNTIL IT'S CONSUMED MY ENTIRE MIND.
SILIENT


THIS THING-- *OUR* THING-- IT'S CONSUMED ME.
RESILIENT

MY PROBLEM IS, I'M CONFLICTED.
PART OF ME-- THE HEALTHY, WISE, EMOTIONALLY STABLE PART--WANTS TO DO EXACTLY WHAT I'VE PROMISED...
BUT I'VE GOT A BUG IN MY EAR, AND I CAN'T IGNORE WHAT'S SITTING IN FRONT OF ME.

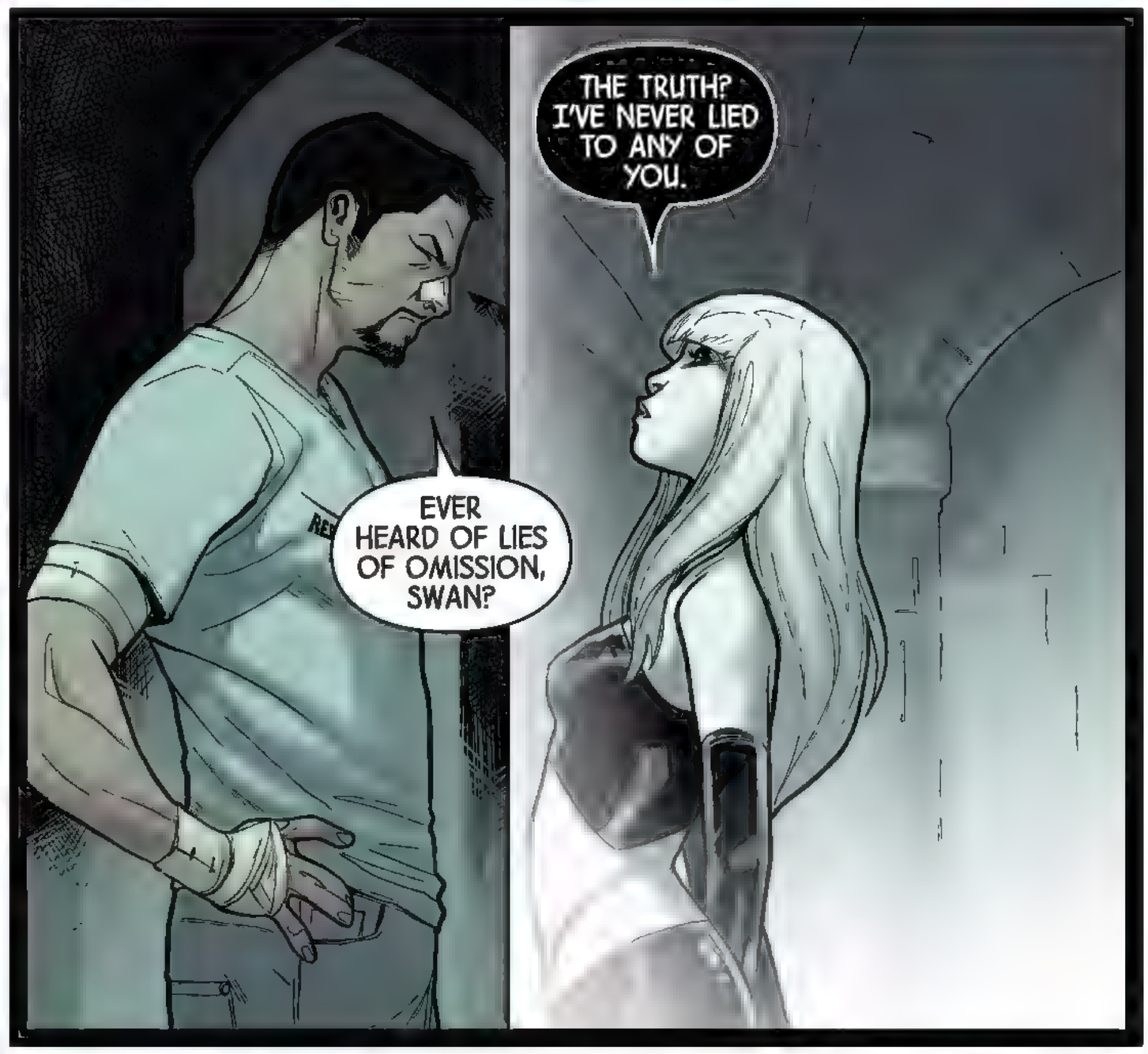
SO, I THINK IT'S COME TO THIS: I'M DONE PLAYING WITH YOU.
AND I WANT ANSWERS.

HAVE YOU ALSO CONSIDERED THAT THE PROBLEM--THE *REAL* PROBLEM--IS THAT YOU'RE SIMPLY IN DENIAL?

THAT THERE ARE NO OTHER ANSWERS THAN THE ONE HANGING IN THE AIR. THAT THERE IS NO... OTHER SOLUTION.

...
HERE'S WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN NEXT:

WE'RE GOING TO DEAL WITH THIS UPCOMING INCURSION.
THEN I'M GOING TO TALK TO THE OTHERS--DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO CONVINCE THEM WE NEED TO BRING IN SOMEONE WHO CAN DIG AROUND IN YOUR MIND.
BYPASS ALL THE GAMES, ALL THE LIES, AND GET RIGHT TO THE TRUTH.
RESILIENT


THE TRUTH? I'VE NEVER LIED TO ANY OF YOU.
EVER HEARD OF LIES OF OMISSION, SWAN?

YES.
THAT'S WHAT ALL THE IGNORANT PEOPLE CALL DISPLAYS OF THEIR IGNORANCE.

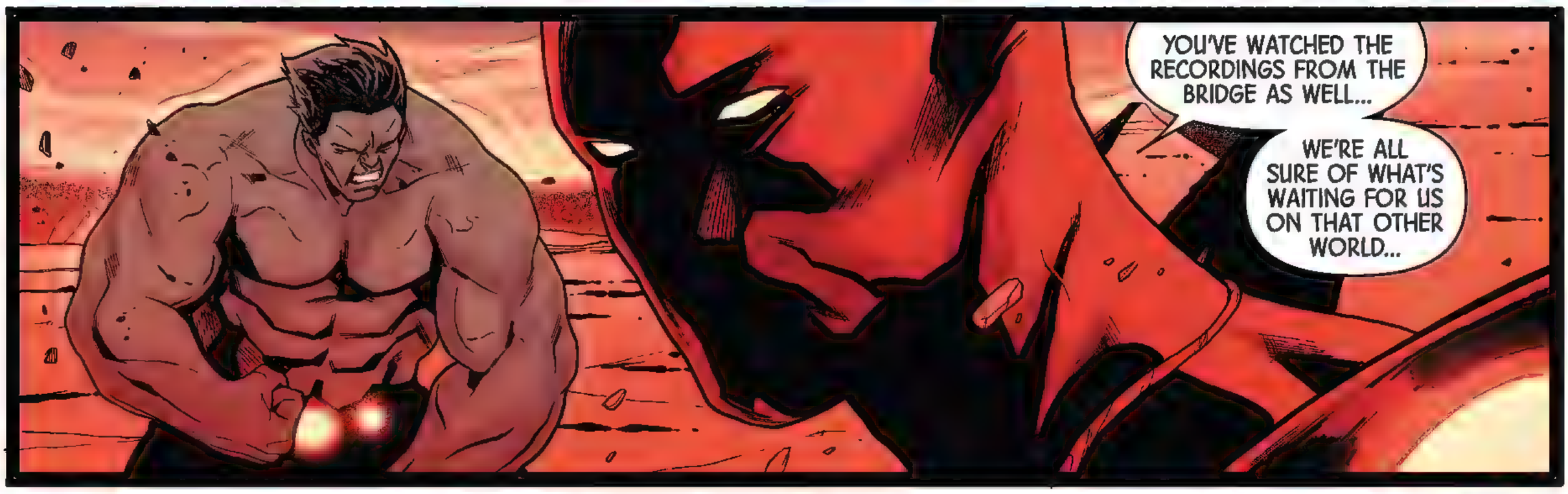
TONY.
IT'S TIME. INCURSION'S TWENTY MINUTES OUT.
WE HAVE TO GO.
RESILIENT

I'LL BE BACK... AND THEN WE'LL GET RIGHT DOWN TO IT.

WANT TO TELL ME WHAT THAT WAS ABOUT?

A MAN COMING TO THE END OF HIMSELF.

AND YOU'RE SURE OF WHAT YOU SAW?



"WE HAVE SEEN SO MUCH EVIL IN THE COLLAPSING OF WORLDS...BUT NOW WE WILL SEE SOMETHING TRULY WICKED.

"WHAT'S WORSE THAN FACING VILLAINS WITH THE FATE OF YOUR WORLD HANGING IN THE BALANCE?

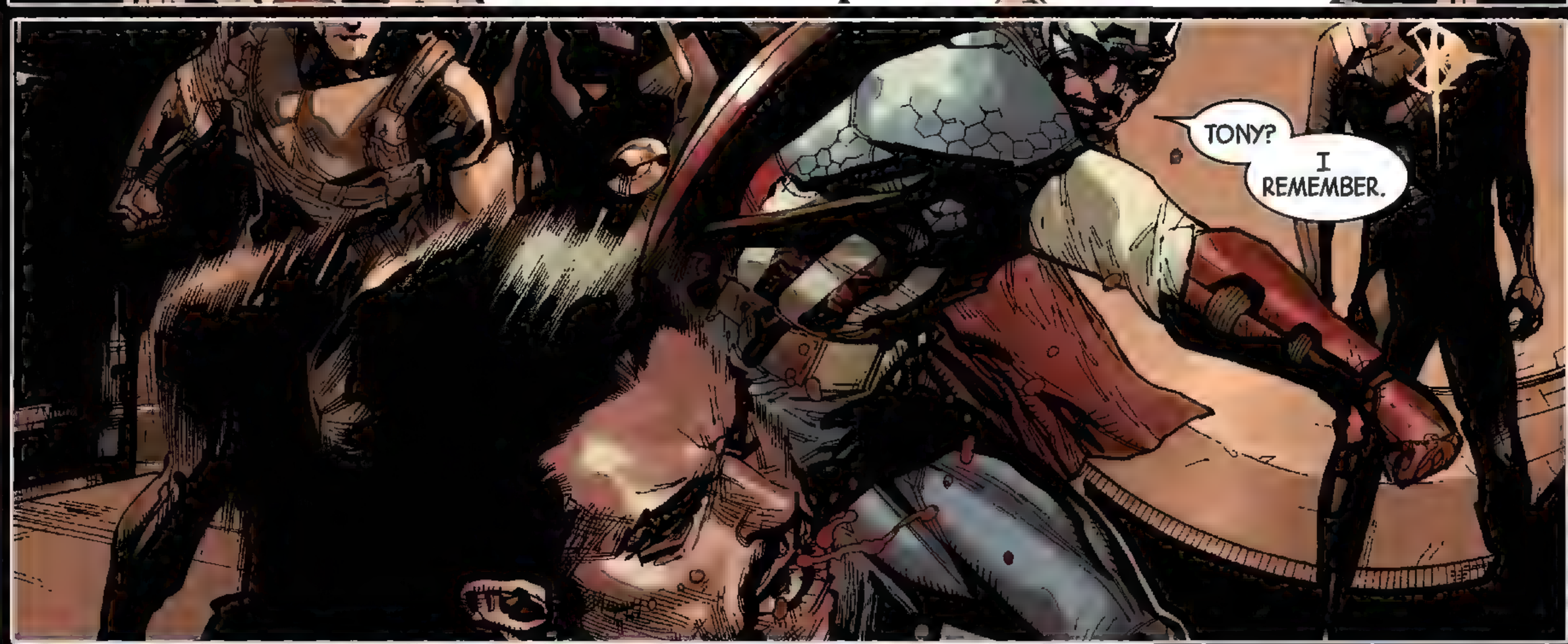
"FACING HEROES."
NEW AVENGERS

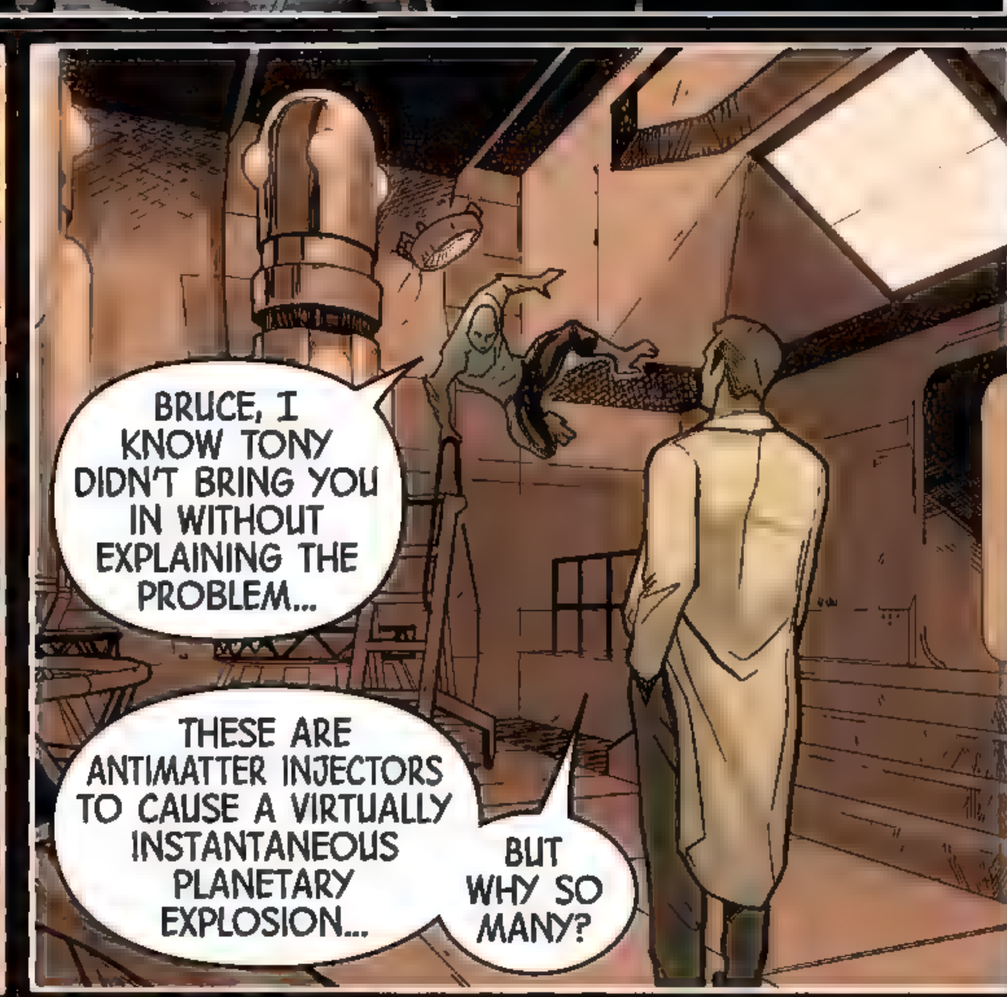
ALL-NEW MARVEL NOW!

HICKMAN
SCHITI
MARTIN

019

PREVIOUSLY IN NEW AVENGERS





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"WE ARE ALL MONSTERS NOW"

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COLOR ARTIST: FRANK MARTIN
LETTERER: VC's JOE CARAMAGNA
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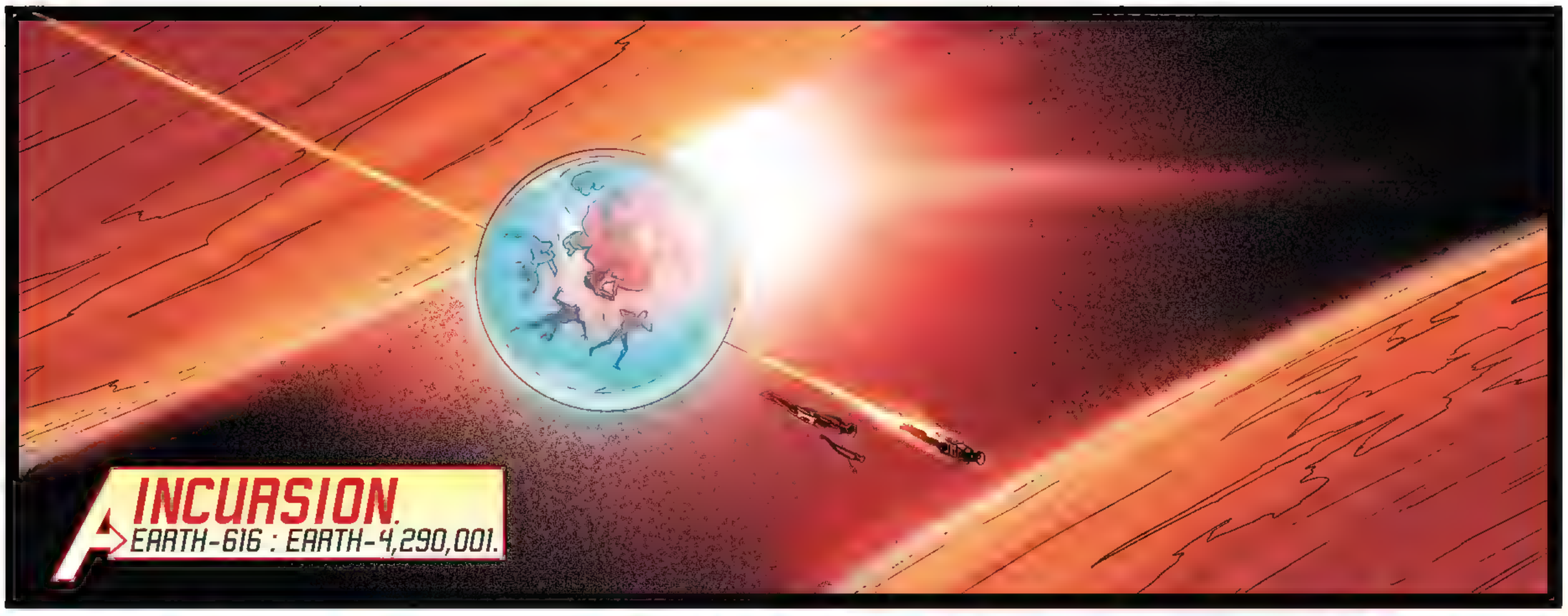
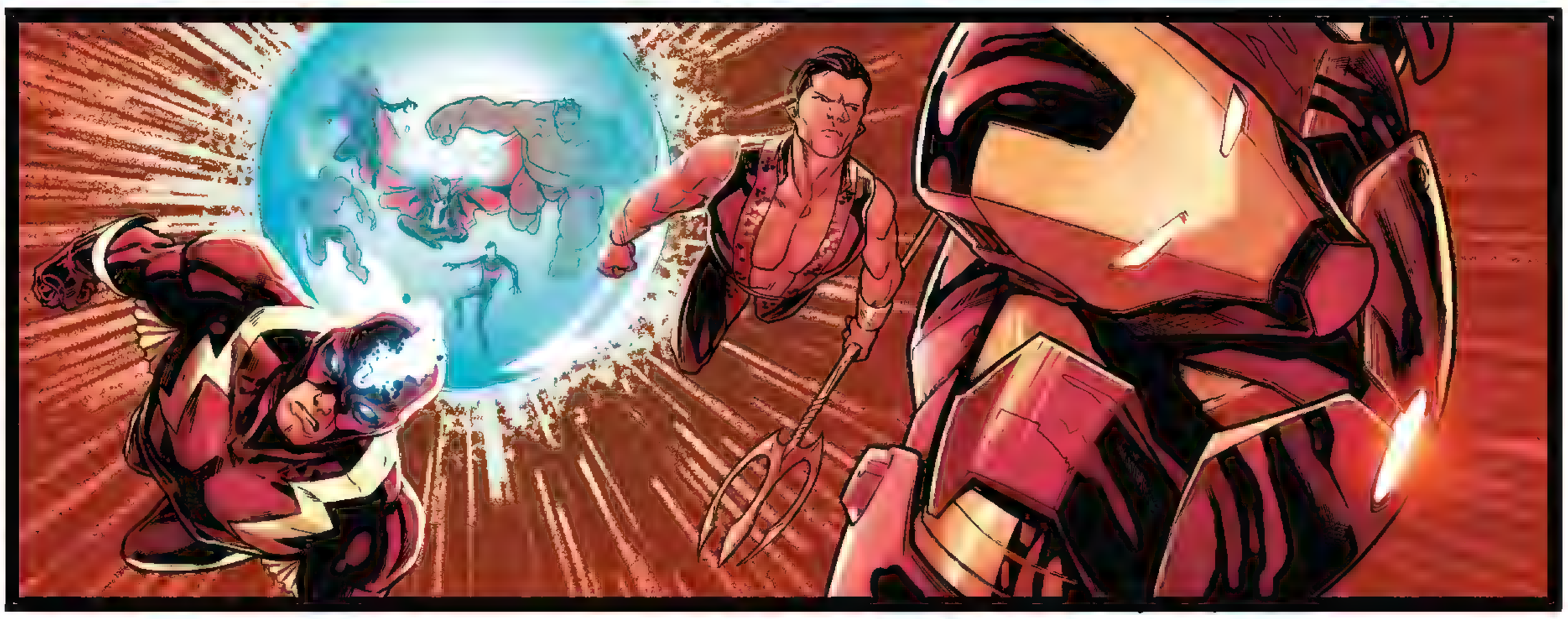
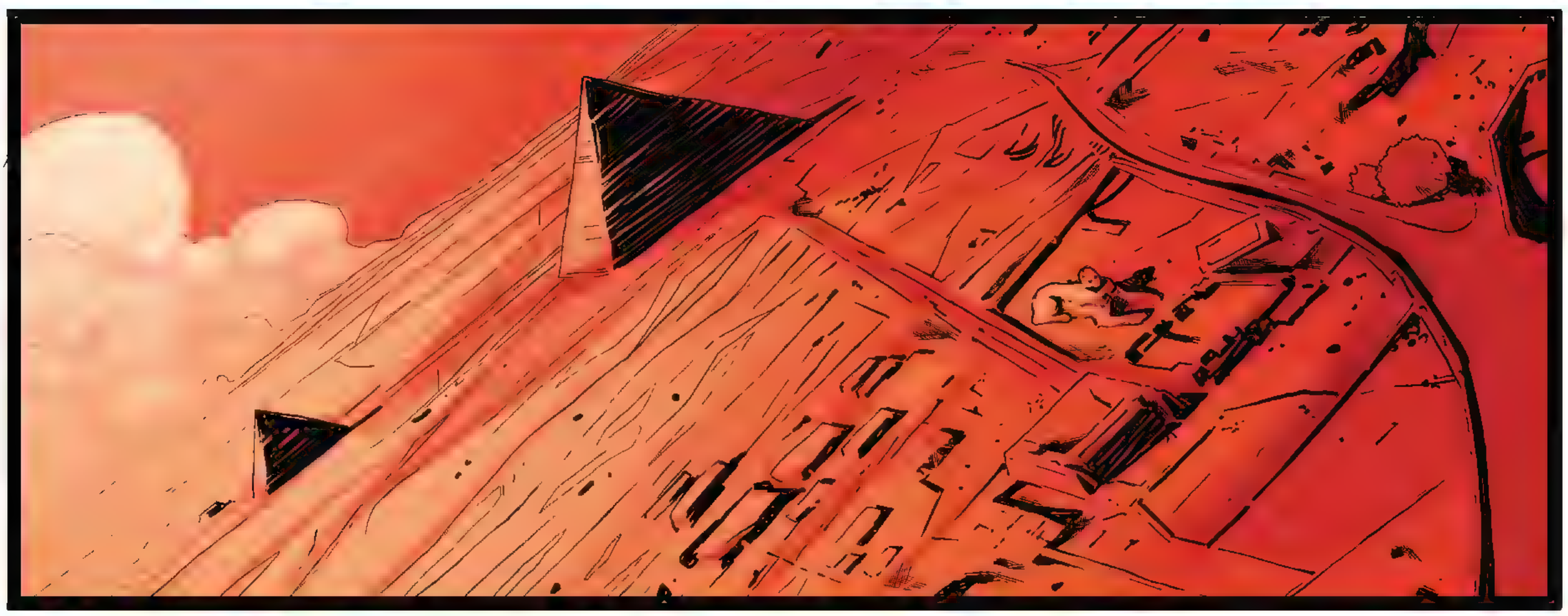
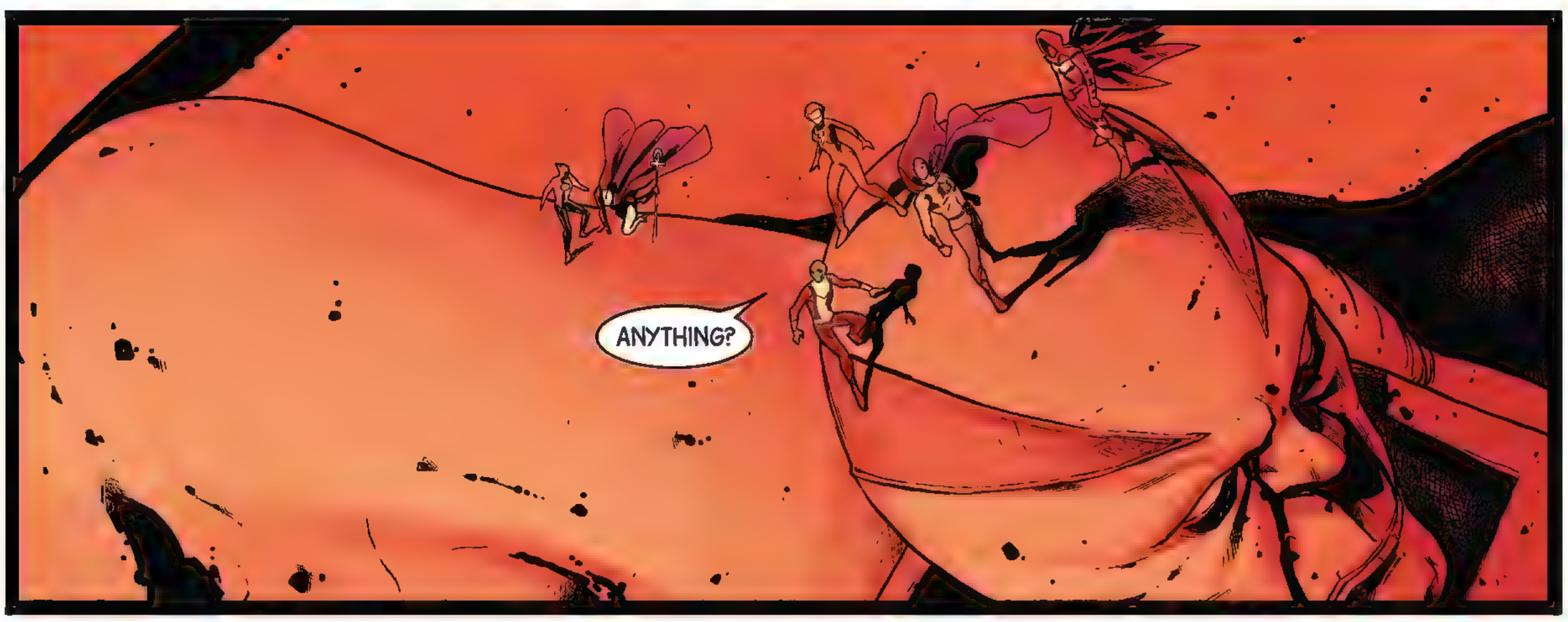
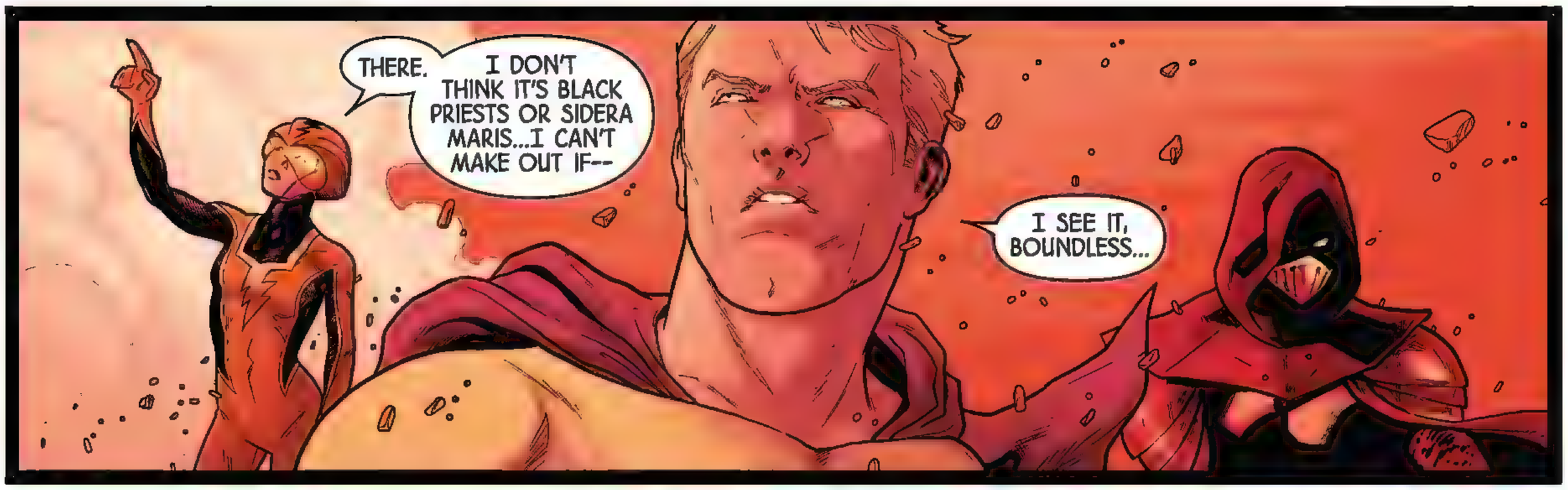
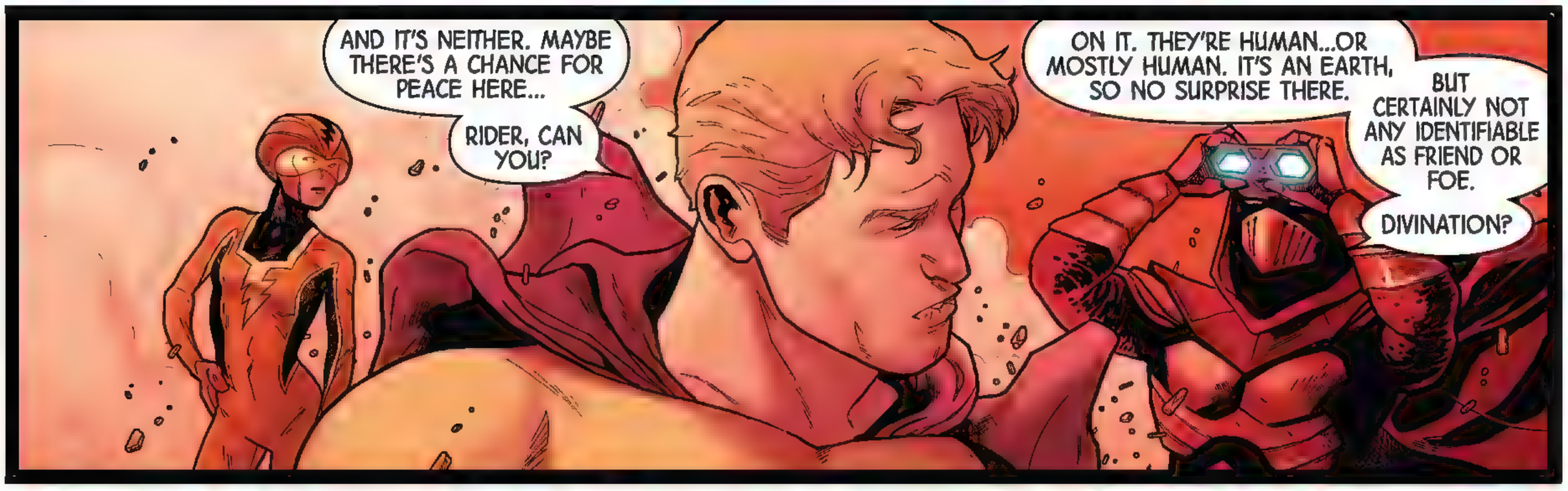

INCURSION.
EARTH-616 : EARTH-4,290,001.



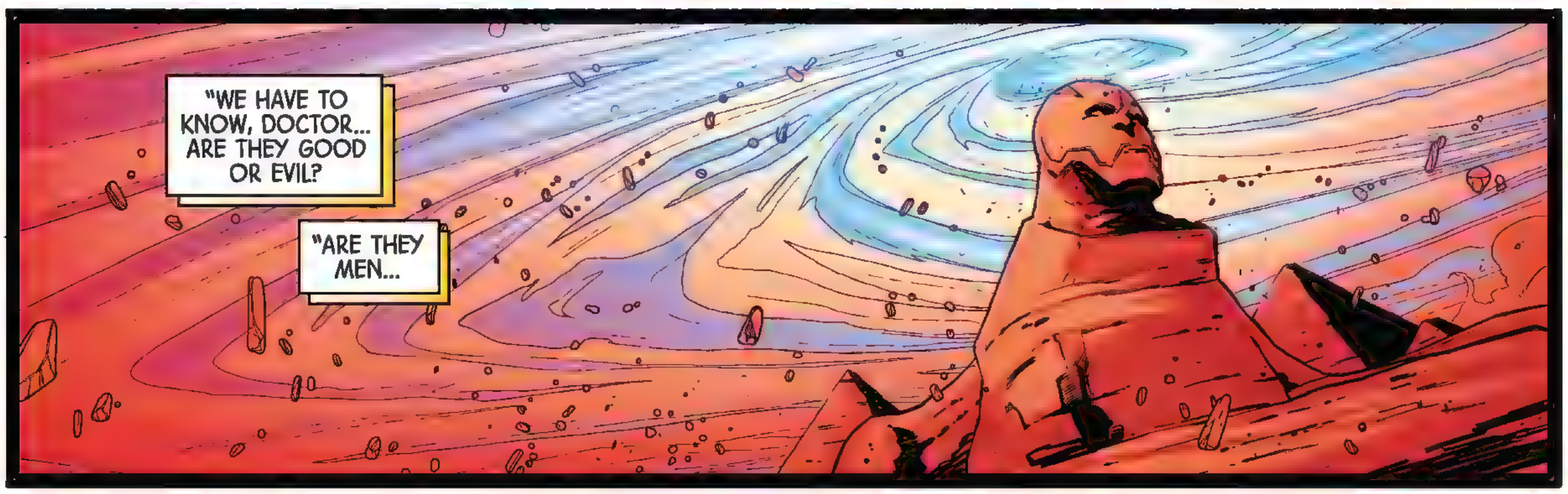



ANYTHING?


THERE.
I DON'T THINK IT'S BLACK PRIESTS OR SIDERA MARIS...I CAN'T MAKE OUT IF--
I SEE IT, BOUNDLESS...

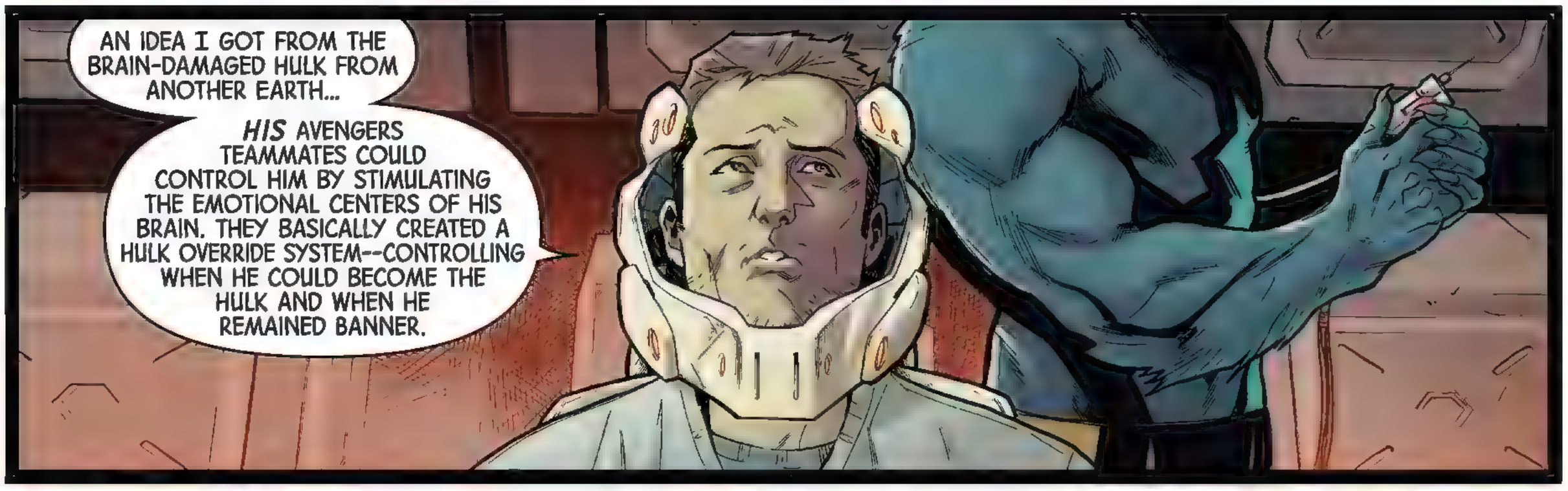

AND IT'S NEITHER. MAYBE THERE'S A CHANCE FOR PEACE HERE...
RIDER, CAN YOU?
ON IT. THEY'RE HUMAN...OR MOSTLY HUMAN. IT'S AN EARTH, SO NO SURPRISE THERE.
BUT CERTAINLY NOT ANY IDENTIFIABLE AS FRIEND OR FOE.
DIVINATION?

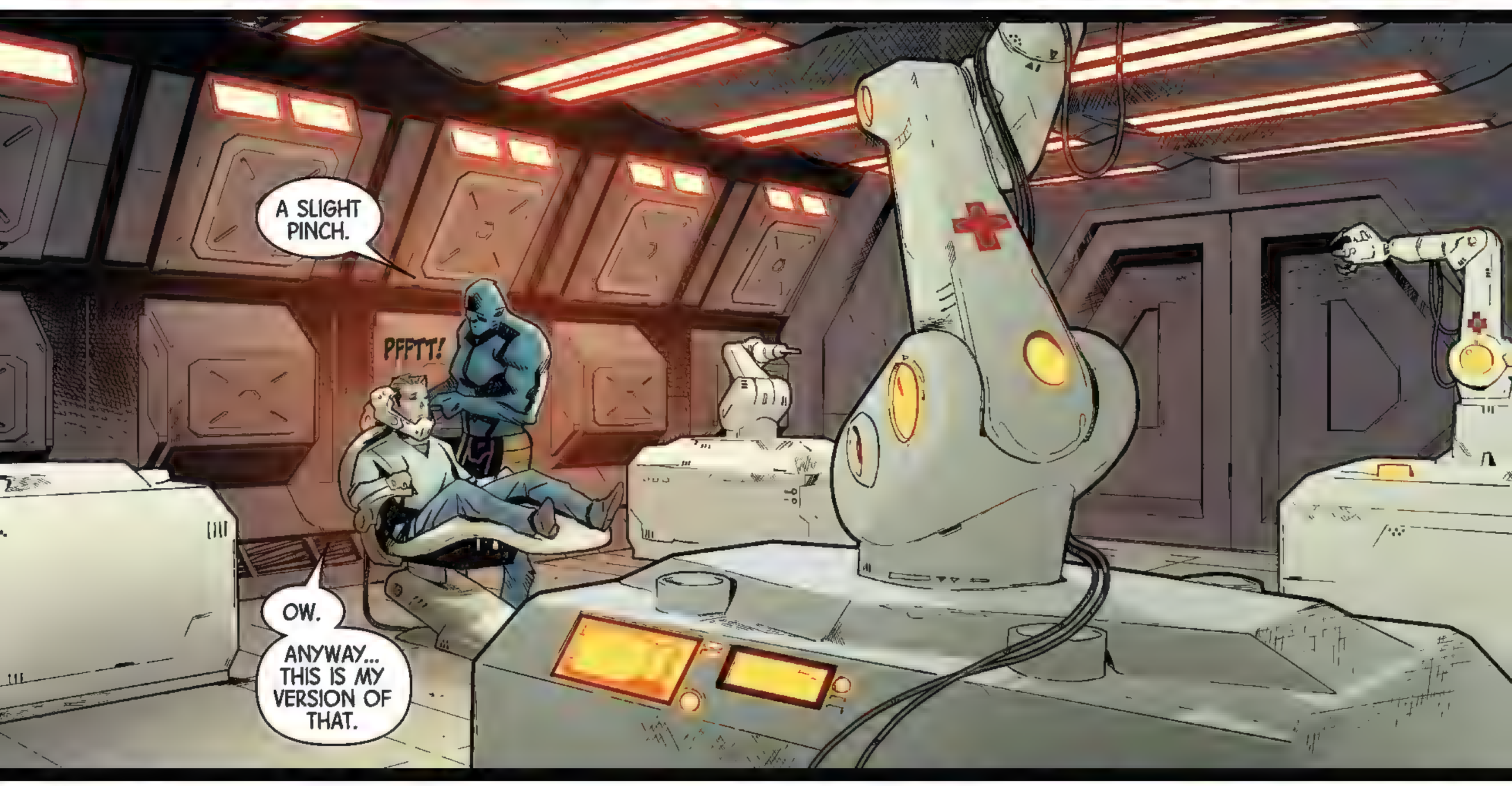
THE NORN ISN'T IN ANY SHAPE TO--
NO. A LITTLE PREVENTION MIGHT SAVE US FROM A TERMINAL EVENT...


"WE HAVE TO KNOW, DOCTOR... ARE THEY GOOD OR EVIL?
"ARE THEY MEN...

"OR ARE THEY MONSTERS?"

THEN.
WHAT'S THIS, DOCTOR BANNER?


AN IDEA I GOT FROM THE BRAIN-DAMAGED HULK FROM ANOTHER EARTH...
HIS AVENGERS TEAMMATES COULD CONTROL HIM BY STIMULATING THE EMOTIONAL CENTERS OF HIS BRAIN. THEY BASICALLY CREATED A HULK OVERRIDE SYSTEM--CONTROLLING WHEN HE COULD BECOME THE HULK AND WHEN HE REMAINED BANNER.


A SLIGHT PINCH.
PFFTT!
OW.
ANYWAY... THIS IS MY VERSION OF THAT.

IT'S A LIMITED WORK-AROUND THAT I'LL USE SPARINGLY...
BUT IT GIVES ME SOME MANNER OF CONTROL OVER WHEN I CHANGE--AND, FOR LACK OF A BETTER TERM, IT ALLOWS ME TO *THROTTLE BACK* WHILE GREEN WITH RAGE.

WELL, PARDON ME FOR STATING THE OBVIOUS, BRUCE... BUT WHY THE LIMITATION?
IF IT WORKS, IT WORKS... NO?

WELL...IT WORKS BY FIRING ELECTRICITY INTO SOME RATHER DELICATE AREAS OF MY BRAIN, DR. McCOY. SO...
YOU'D RATHER NOT LOBOTOMIZE YOURSELF.
ESPECIALLY SINCE WE'RE HERE FIRST AND FOREMOST FOR THAT VERY THING.

IF YOU SAY SO...
I'M BEGINNING TO WONDER HOW TRUE THAT REALLY IS.

I'M NEW HERE, HANK.
NEBULOUS HINTS AT SECRET MOTIVATIONS JUST LEAVE ME WONDERING WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.

WITH THE TWO OF US, THERE'S STILL ENOUGH BRAIN ACTIVITY IN OUR SECRET ORGANIZATION TO POWER A SMALL CITY.
ALL THESE QUESTIONS WE BRILLIANT MEN ARE ASKING...
WHAT IF THEY'RE NOT THE *RIGHT* QUESTIONS AT ALL?

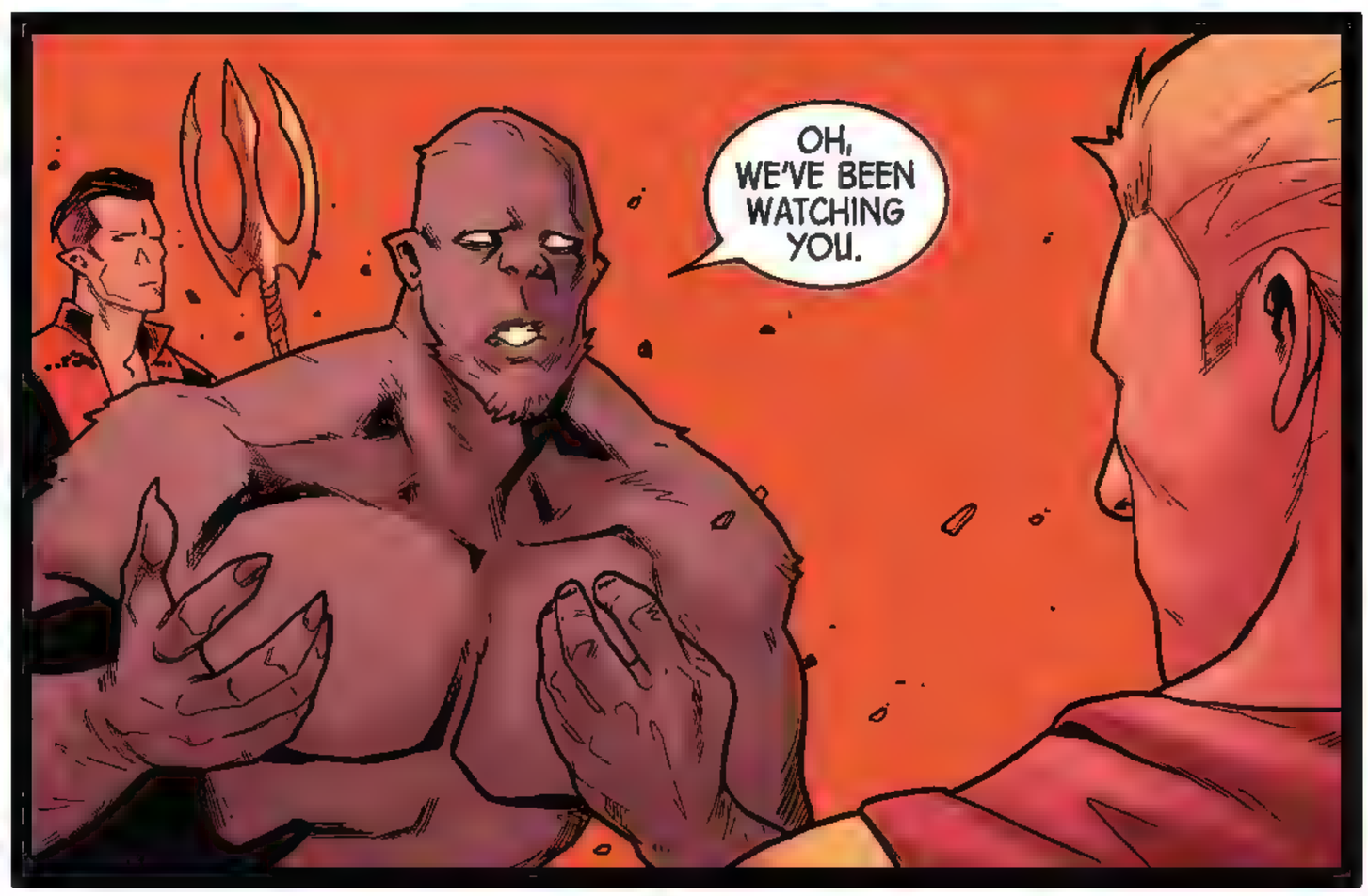
GO ON...I'M LISTENING.
WHAT IF--IN THE END--THIS ISN'T AN EXERCISE IN SURVIVAL, BRUCE, BUT A QUESTION OF HUMANITY?
YOU TELL ME...

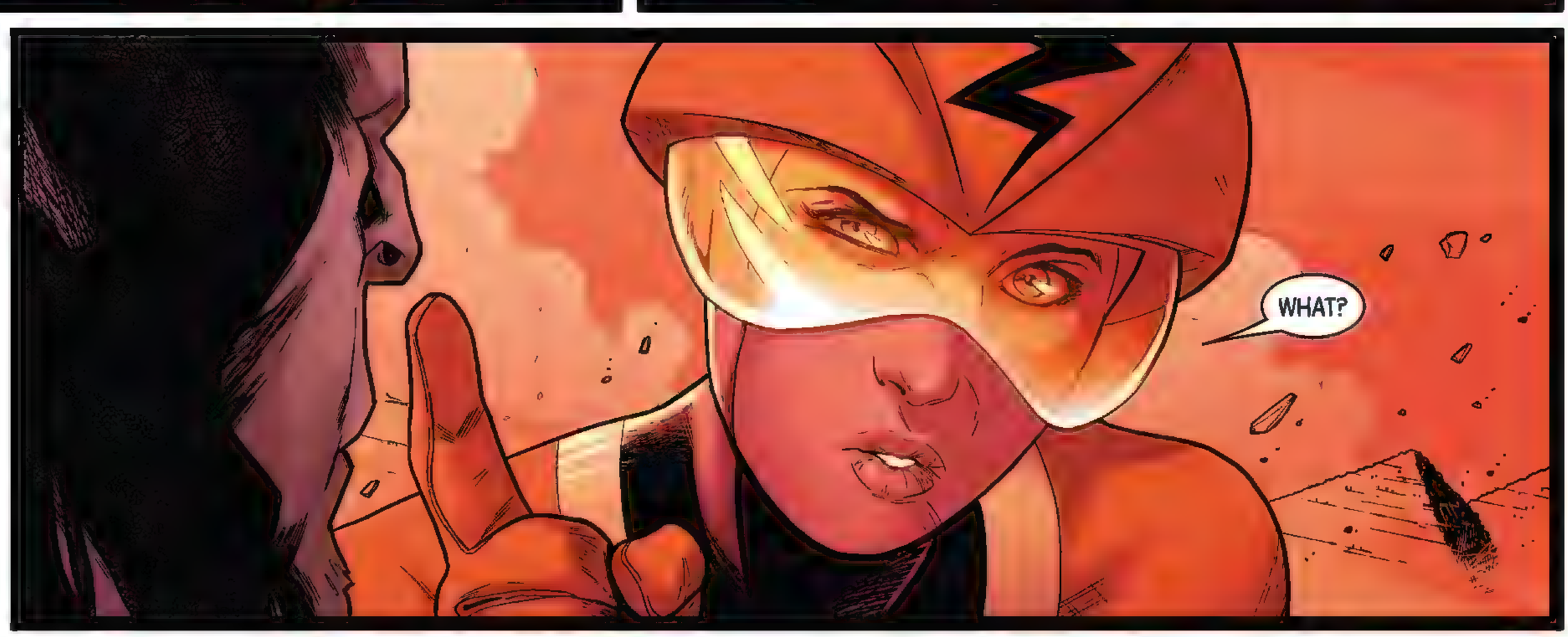
WHO HERE KNOWS BETTER THAN YOU AND I...*THE REALITY* OF THAT STRUGGLE...
AND HOW EASILY THE HUMAN GIVES WAY TO SOMETHING *LESS MORAL* AND *MORE PRIMAL*.

NOW.
LIVING IN A VIOLENT WORLD MAKES ONE QUESTION THE GOODNESS OF MAN. YET YOU CAME HERE, WITH YOUR ARMS WIDE OPEN...
TALKING *PEACE* WHILE THE SKY BLEEDS RED.

SEE? THERE *IS* HOPE.
STILL...

A PEACEFUL ARRIVAL UNDER A WHITE FLAG AND PASSING SOME MAGICAL RORSCHACH TEST ISN'T REALLY A GUARANTEE OF ANYTHING, IS IT?
HOW *CAN* WE REALLY TRUST YOU?
MORE IMPORTANTLY... HOW DO *YOU* KNOW TO TRUST *US?*


OH, WE'VE BEEN WATCHING YOU.

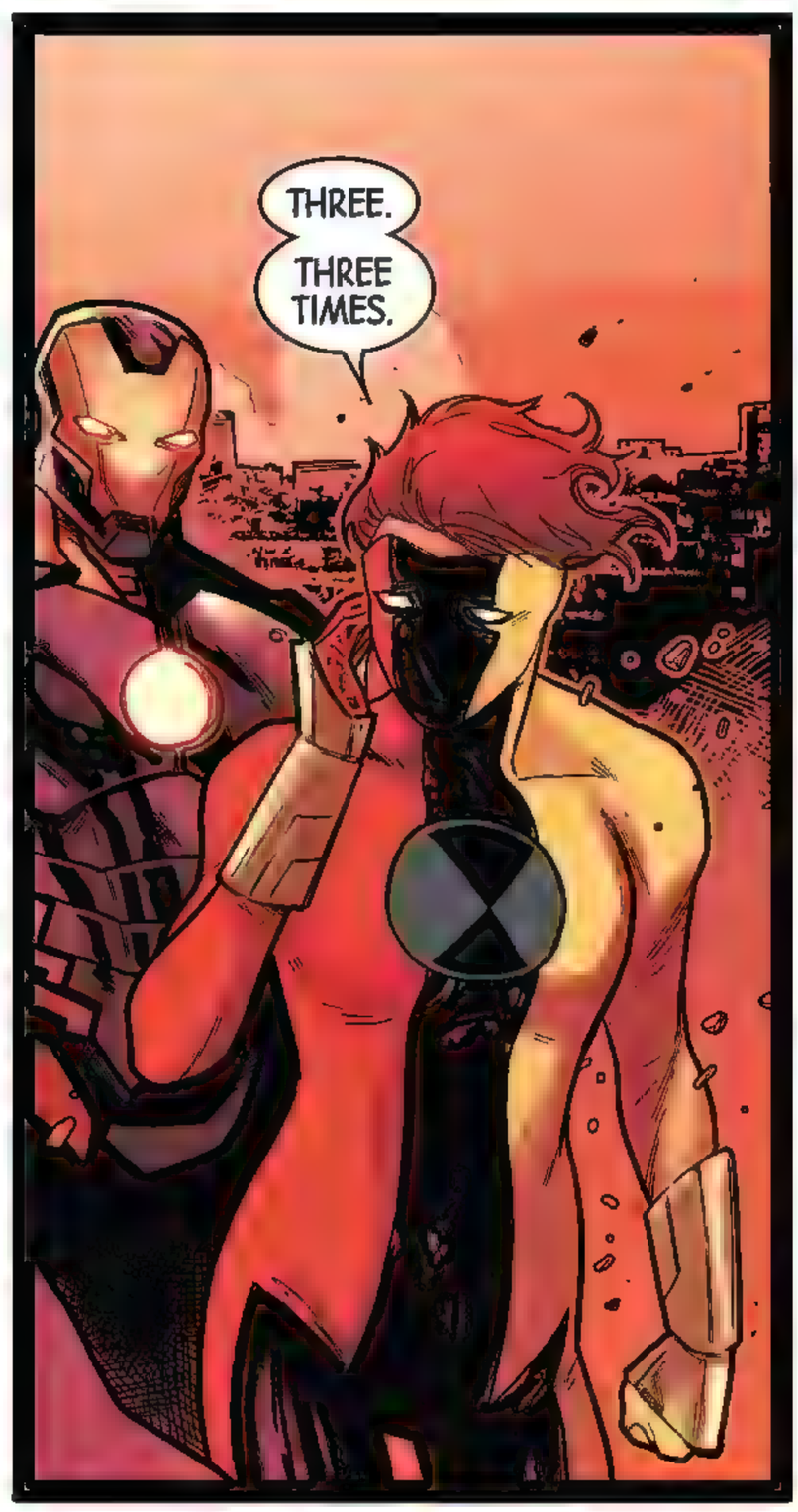

WHAT?

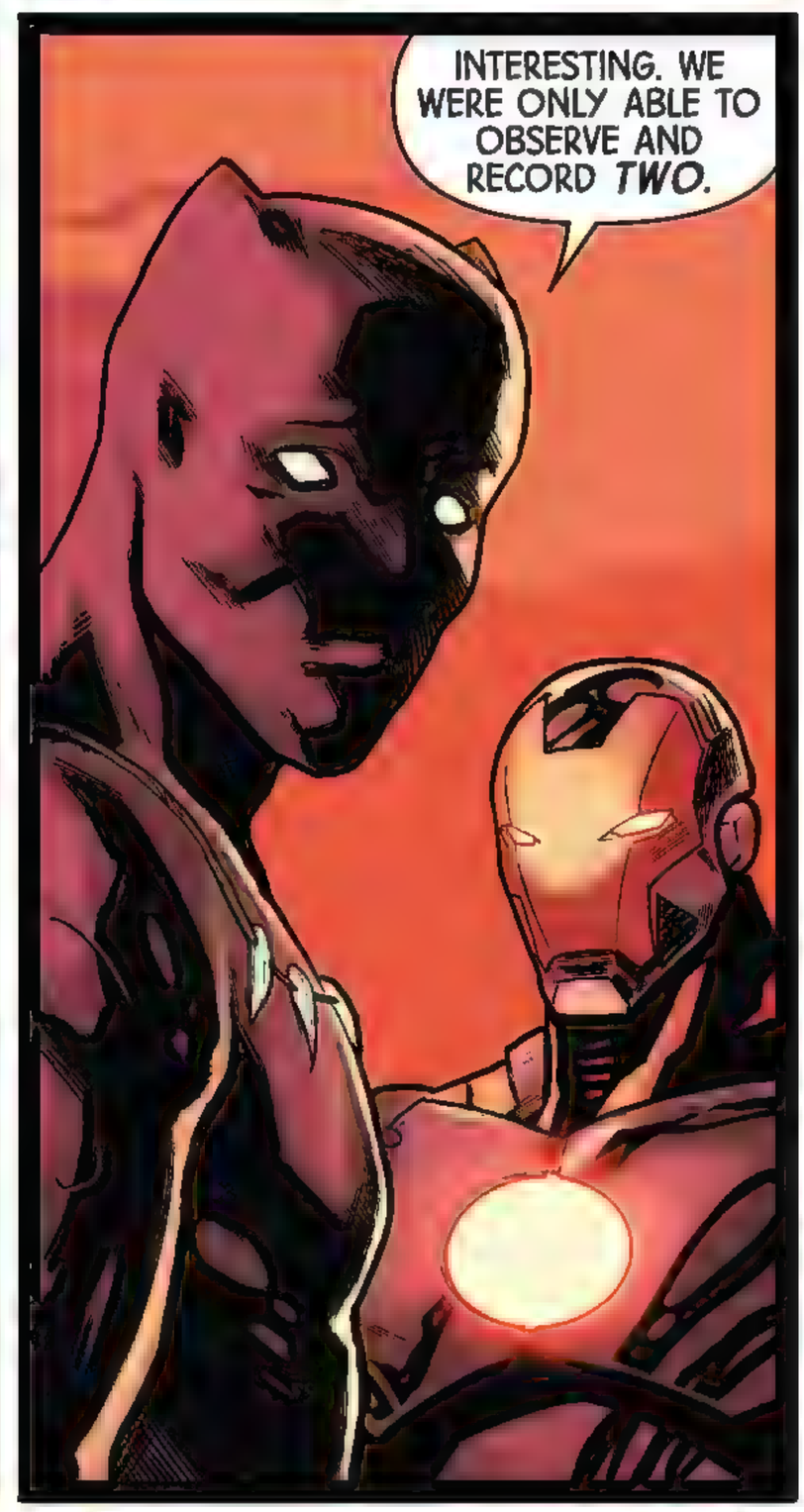
WE'VE BEEN WATCHING YOU.
SAYING IT AGAIN DOESN'T MAKE IT BETTER.
CREEP.

NO, YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND... WE CONSTRUCTED A MACHINE THAT ENABLED US TO OBSERVE YOUR EARTH.
WE USED THIS MACHINE TO STUDY MULTIPLE EARTHS UNDERGOING INCURSIONS... SO WE USED IT TO STUDY YOU.
I THINK THEY GET IT, HENRY.

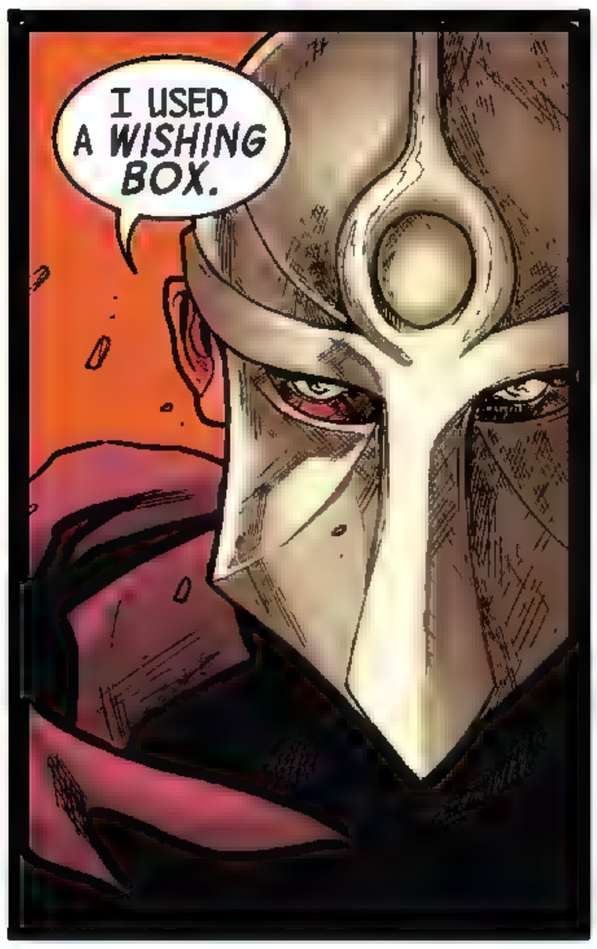
YOU HAVE SEEN THE END OF WORLDS?

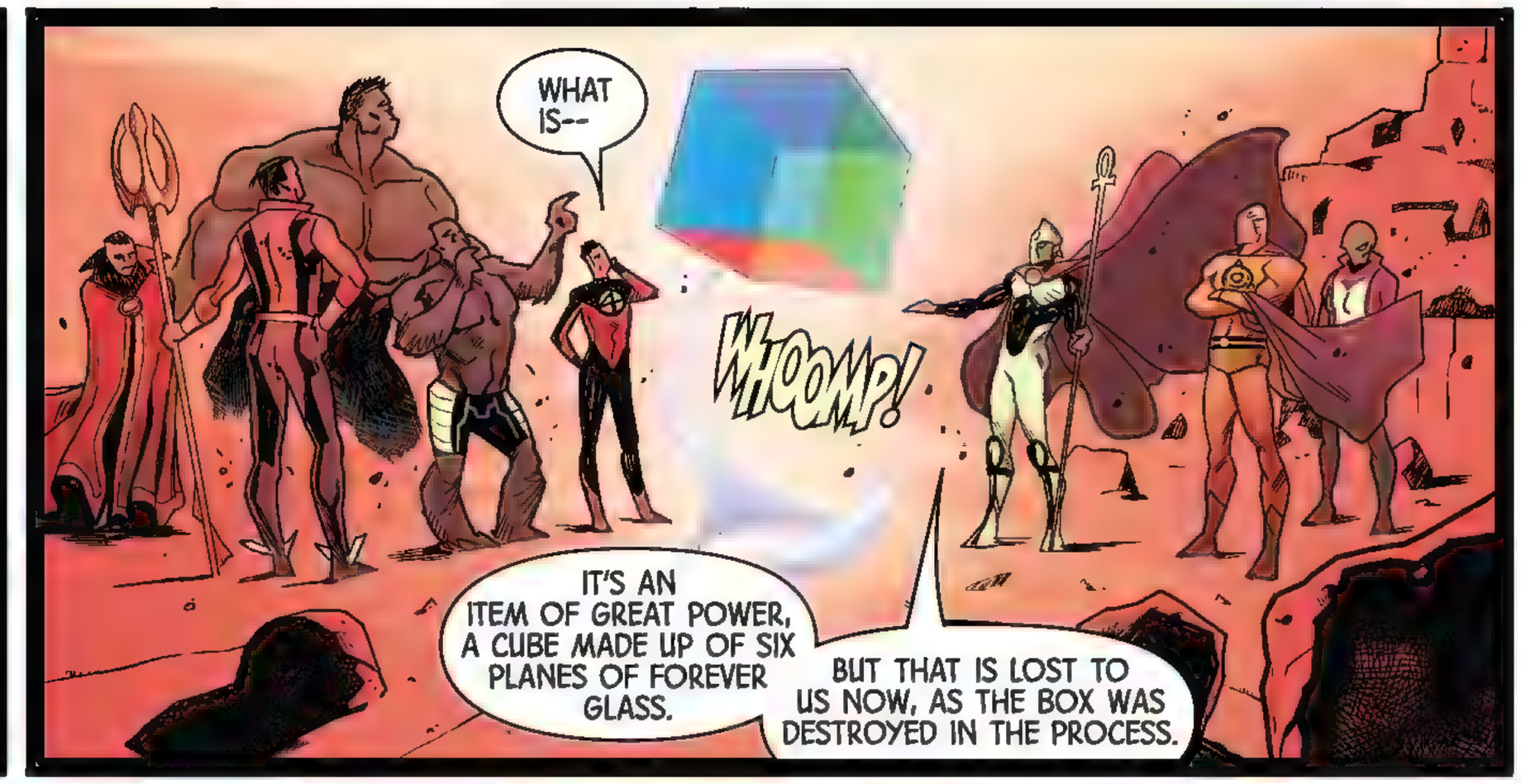
TOO MANY TIMES.
AND YOU?


THREE.
THREE TIMES.


INTERESTING. WE WERE ONLY ABLE TO OBSERVE AND RECORD TWO.

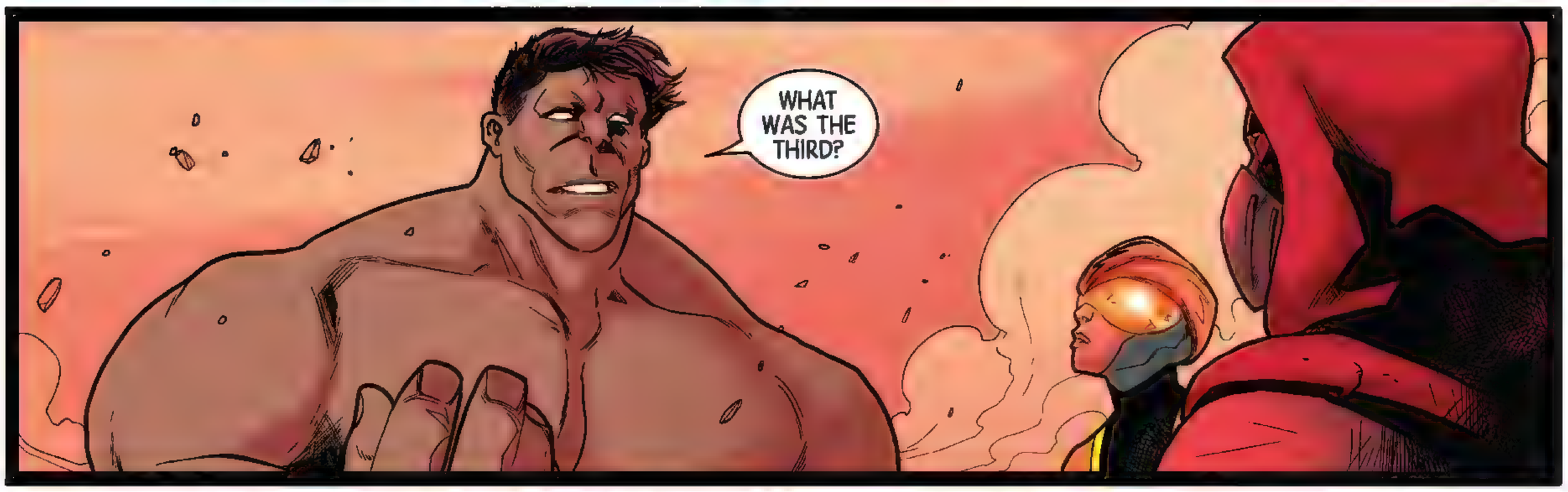
YES. WHILE YOUR MAPMAKER SOLUTION WAS LESS THAN ELEGANT, THE OTHER INSTANCE WE OBSERVED WAS FASCINATING...
IN FACT, ALL OUR MODELS SEEMED TO IMPLY THAT WHAT YOU DID WASN'T POSSIBLE.
HOW DID YOU MOVE YOUR EARTH-- AND BY EXTENSION YOUR UNIVERSE-- OUT OF PHASE?

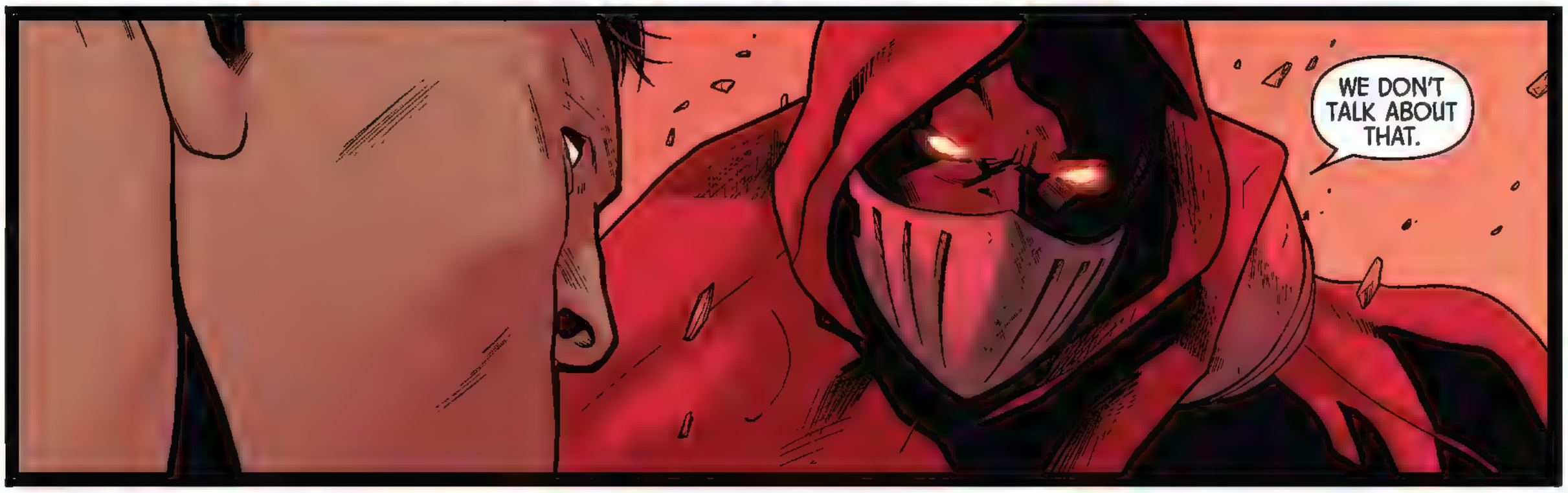

I USED A *WISHING* BOX.

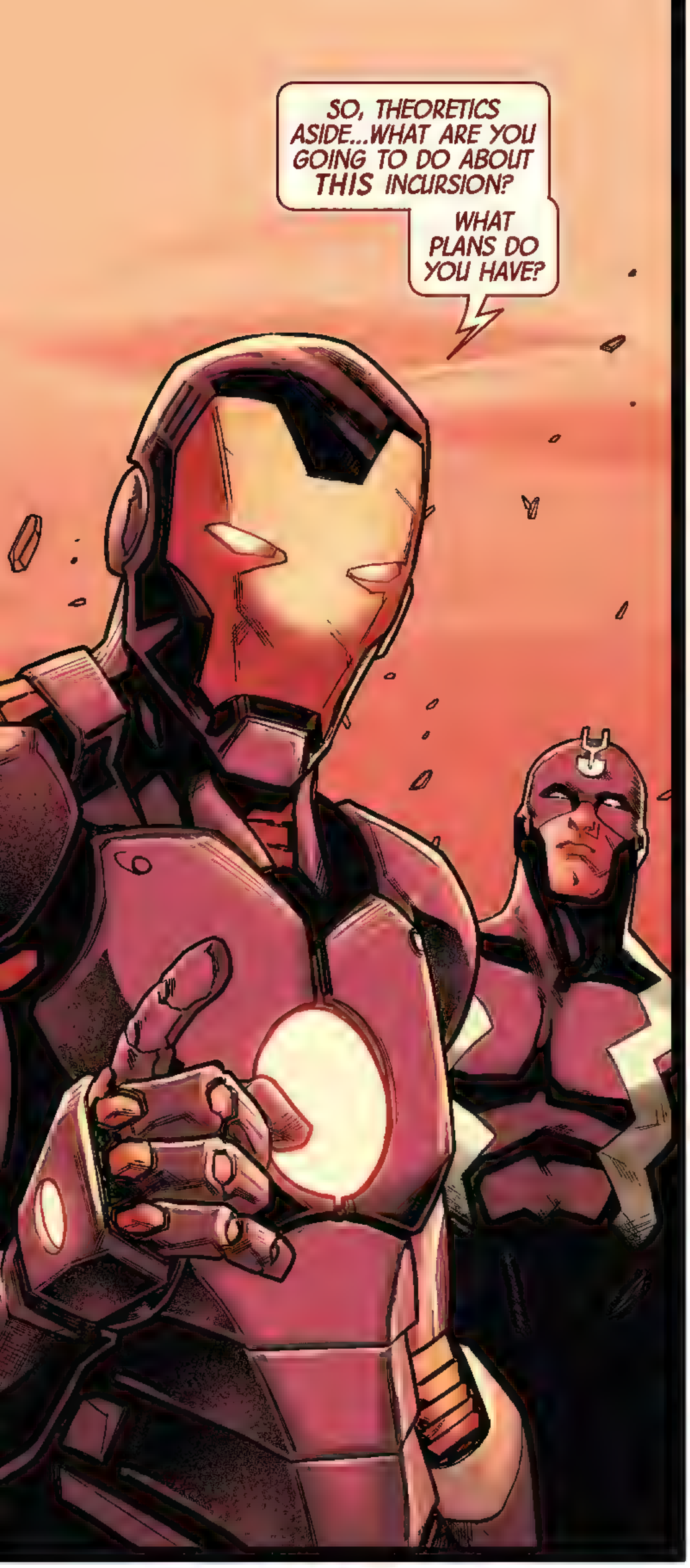

WHAT IS--
WHOOMP!
IT'S AN ITEM OF GREAT POWER, A CUBE MADE UP OF SIX PLANES OF FOREVER GLASS.
BUT THAT IS LOST TO US NOW, AS THE BOX WAS DESTROYED IN THE PROCESS.

OH. I SEE.
YOU UNDERSTAND? YOU HAVE SEEN A WISHING BOX BEFORE?

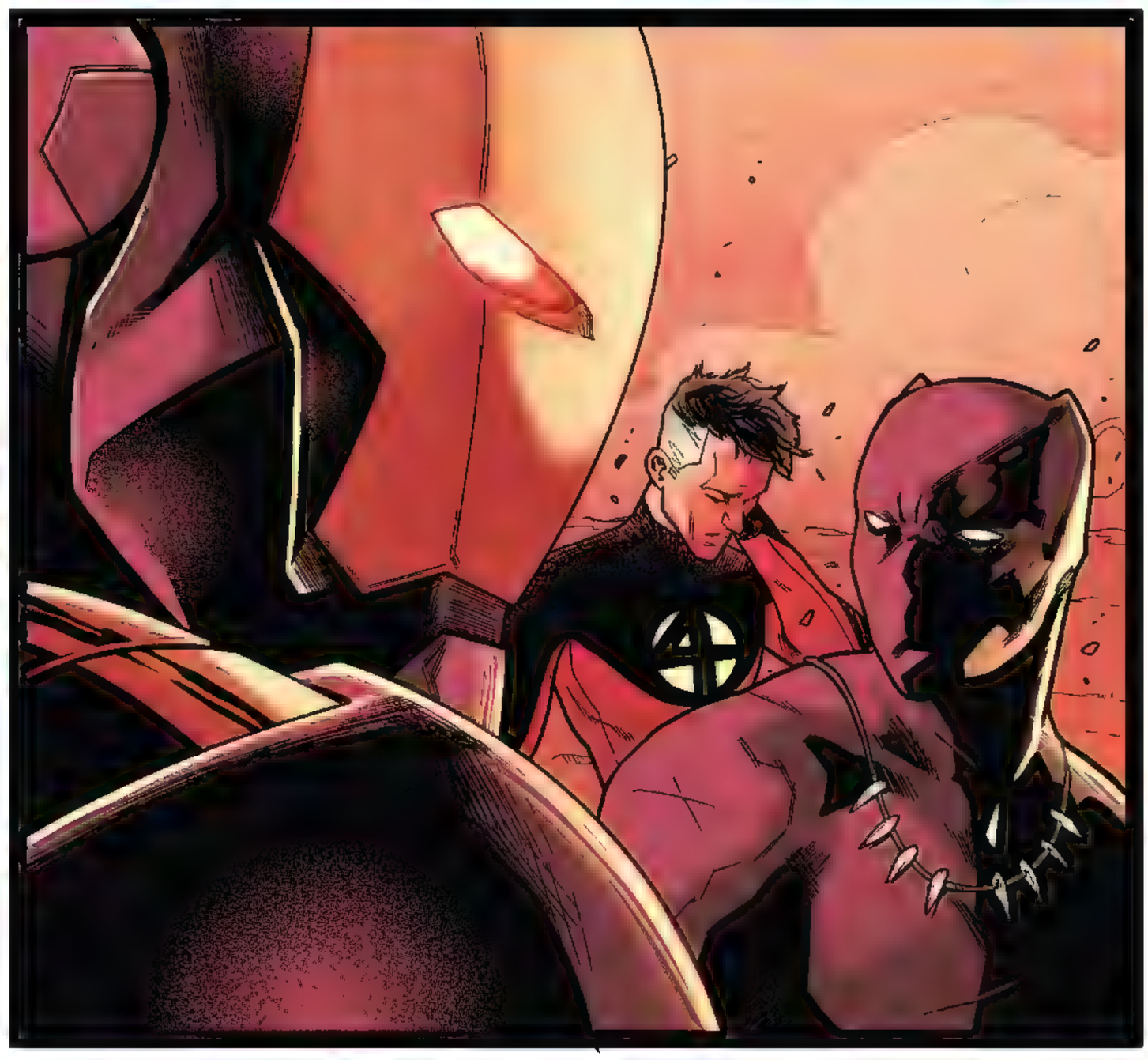
A DIFFERENT MANIFESTATION OF IT. WE CALLED OURS A *GAUNTLET*. IT HAD INFINITY GEMS, NOT PLANES OF... FOREVER GLASS.
I SUPPOSE THERE'S SOME COMFORT IN KNOWING THAT WAS NEVER A LONG-TERM SOLUTION.


WHAT WAS THE THIRD?

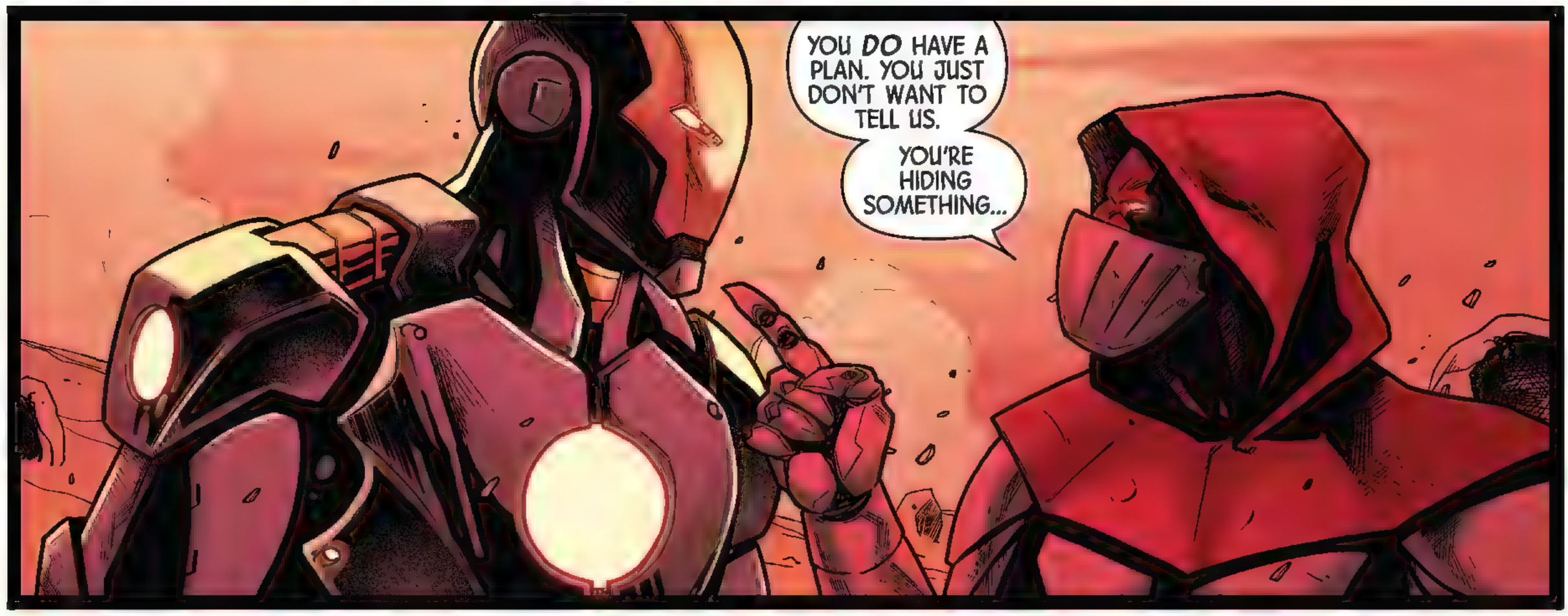

WE DON'T TALK ABOUT THAT.


SO, THEORETICS ASIDE...WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT THIS INCURSION?
WHAT PLANS DO YOU HAVE?

WE HAVE NO PLANS--WHAT PLANS COULD ANYONE HAVE FOR SOMETHING LIKE THIS?
DO YOU HAVE PLANS?



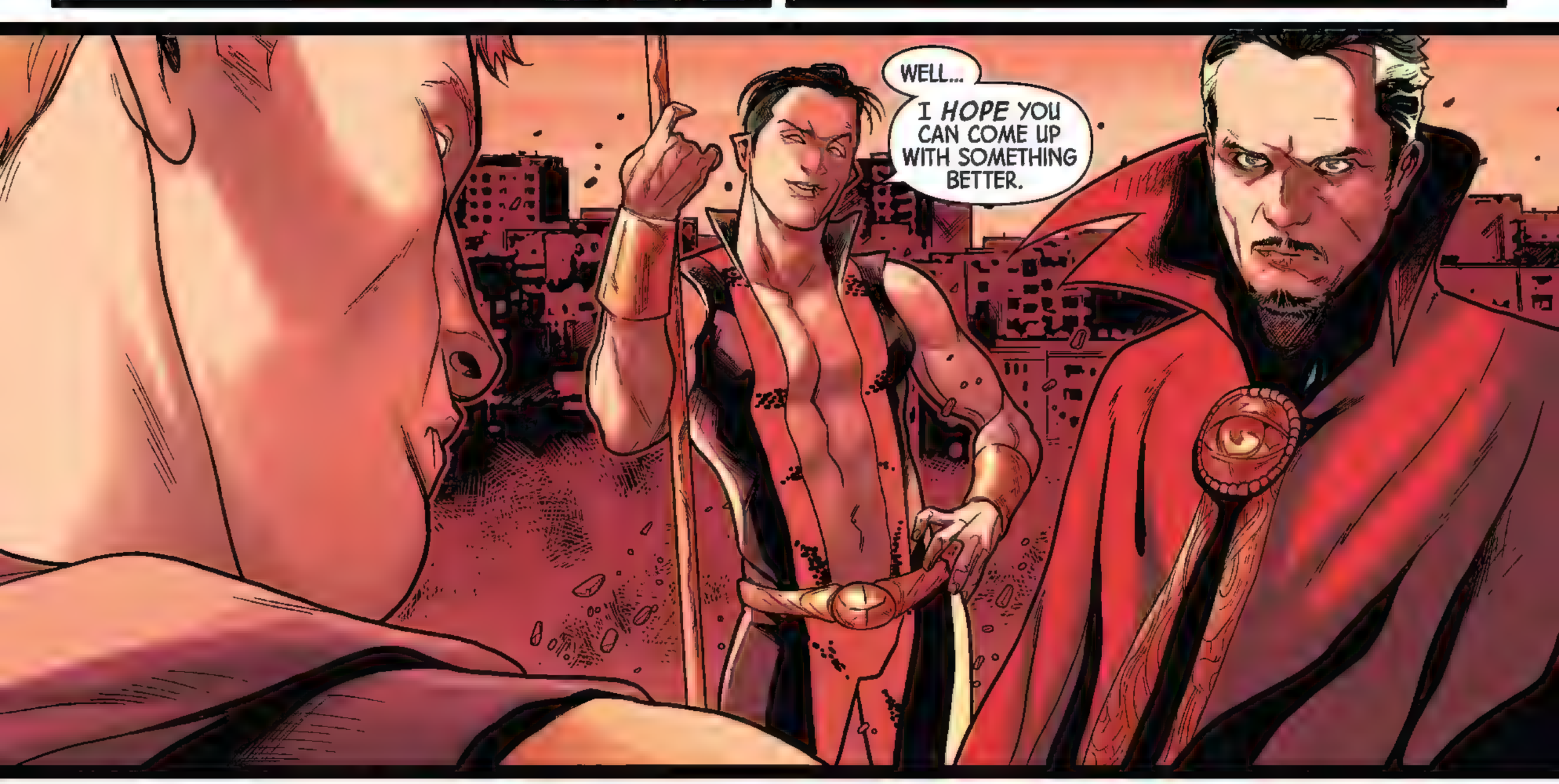
YOU KNOW WHAT...WHY DON'T WE TALK ABOUT OPTIONS INSTEAD OF WORSE-CASE SCENARIOS?
SEE IF WE CAN'T COME UP WITH SOMETHING IN THE TIME WE HAVE LEFT.


YOU DO HAVE A PLAN. YOU JUST DON'T WANT TO TELL US.
YOU'RE HIDING SOMETHING...

YES. WE HAVE A PLAN.
IT'S AN ANTIMATTER DEVICE THAT WILL DESTROY A PLANET. WE HAVE A *BOMB*.
WE BUILT A BOMB THAT WILL DESTROY A WORLD.

ARE YOU SURE YOU DON'T HAVE ANYTHING ELSE?

I TOLD YOU ALREADY...
WE HAVE *HOPE*.

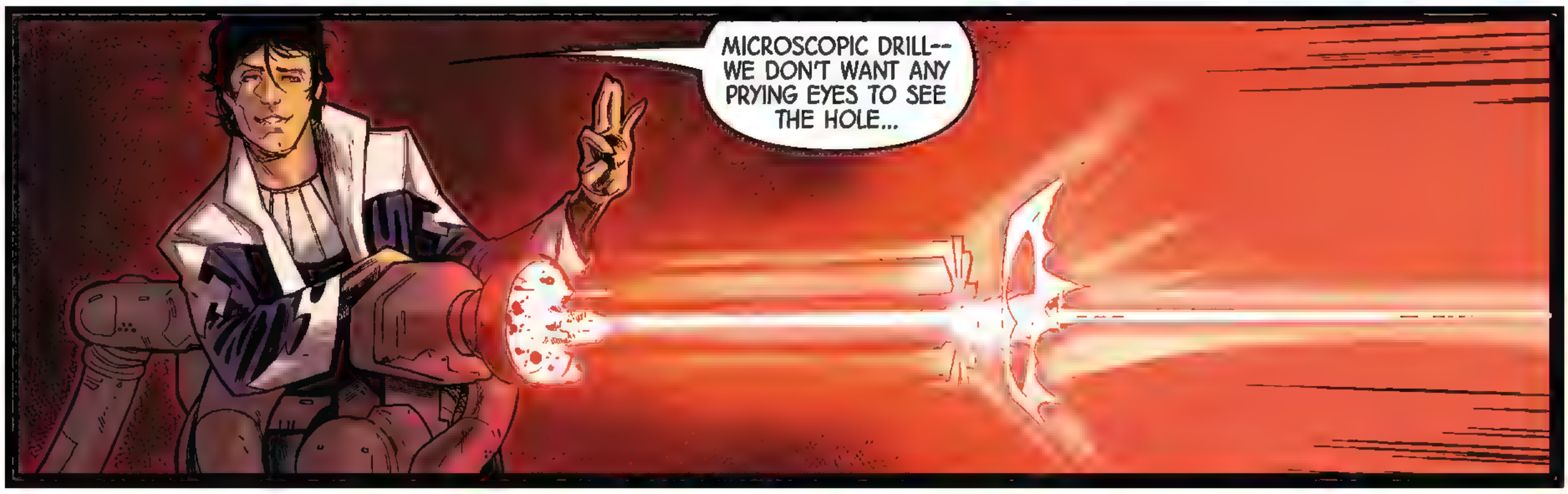

WELL...
I *HOPE* YOU CAN COME UP WITH SOMETHING BETTER.

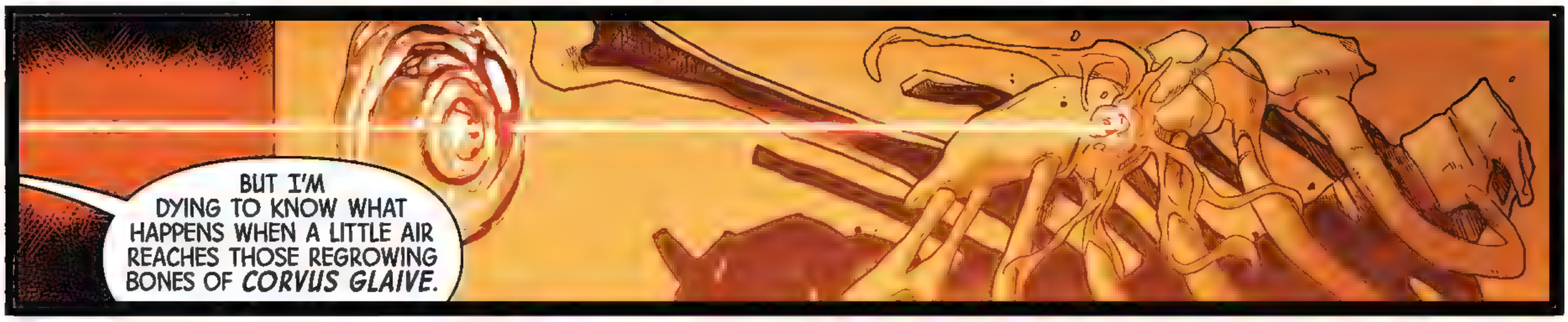
WAKANDA.
THE NECROPOLIS. EARTH-616.
"EVERYONE AROUND HERE IS CONCERNED ABOUT RUNNING OUT OF TIME.
"I SAY THE TICKING CLOCK MAKES US LESS WASTEFUL. I SAY THE CLOCK MAKES US BOLD."

I SAY IT'S TIME TO GET A LITTLE CRAZY.
WHAT ABOUT YOU, LITTLE BIRD?

I THINK, FOR A MAN OF ACTION, YOU TALK TOO MUCH, MAXIMUS.

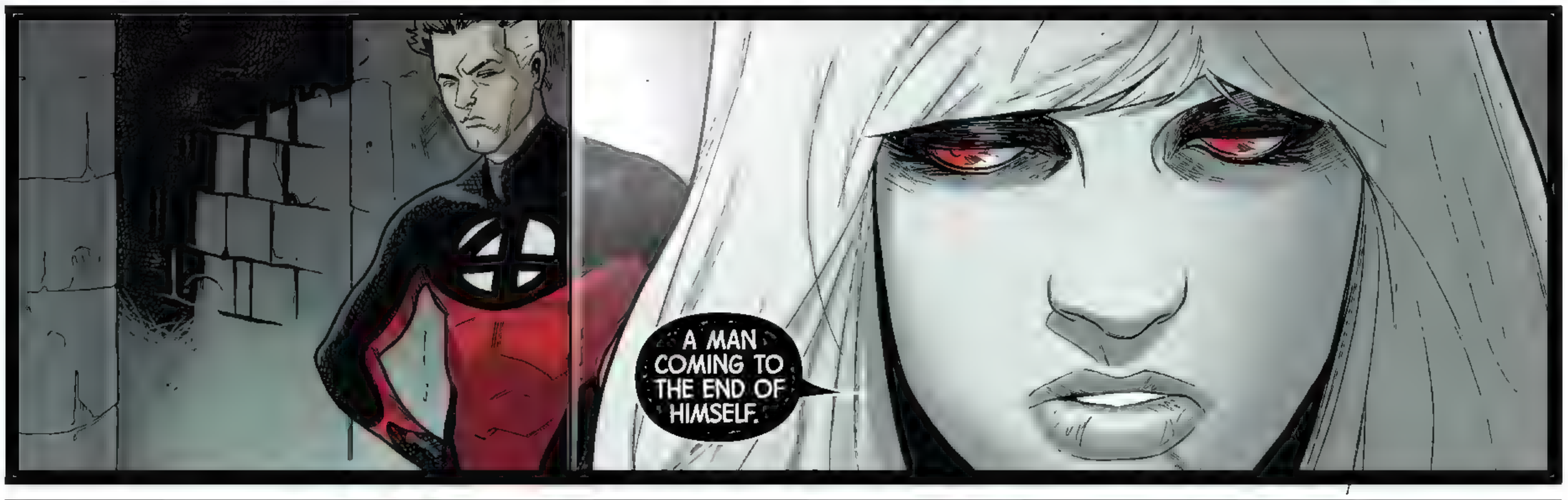
YES, YOU'RE RIGHT, OF COURSE. SO... FORWARD WITH THE EXPERIMENT.
THEY NEVER LET ME PLAY WITH THE GOOD TOYS...SO I HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL ALL THE COWBOYS ARE AWAY AT THE ROW-DEE-OH.

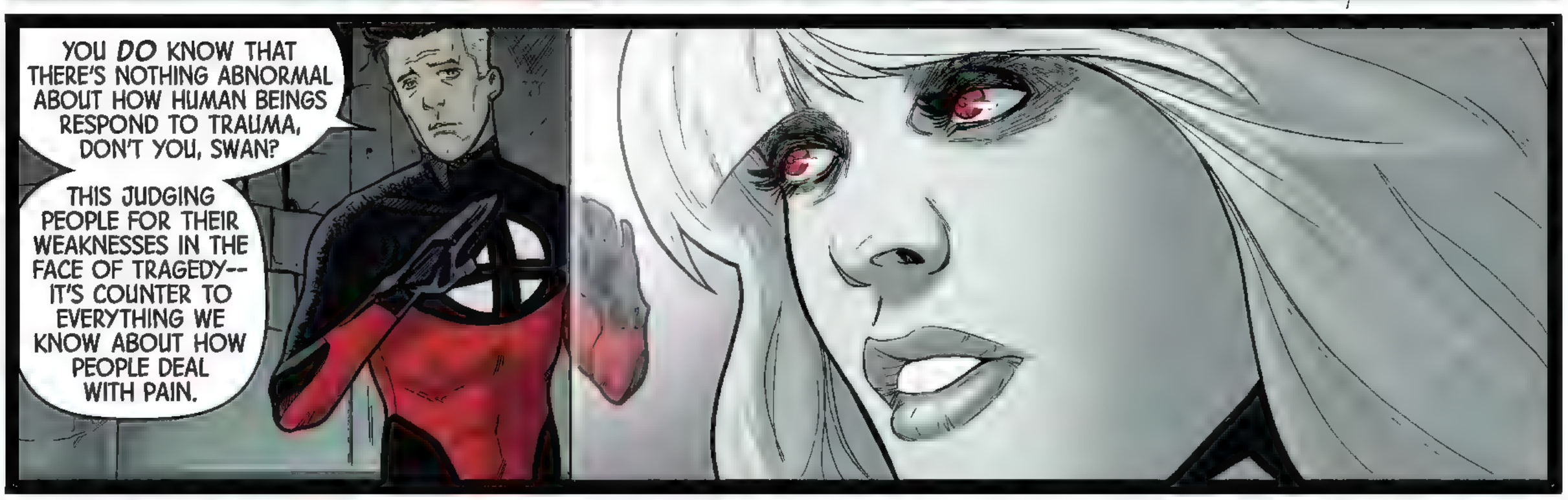

MICROSCOPIC DRILL-- WE DON'T WANT ANY PRYING EYES TO SEE THE HOLE...


BUT I'M DYING TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A LITTLE AIR REACHES THOSE REGROWING BONES OF *CORVUS GLAIVE*.

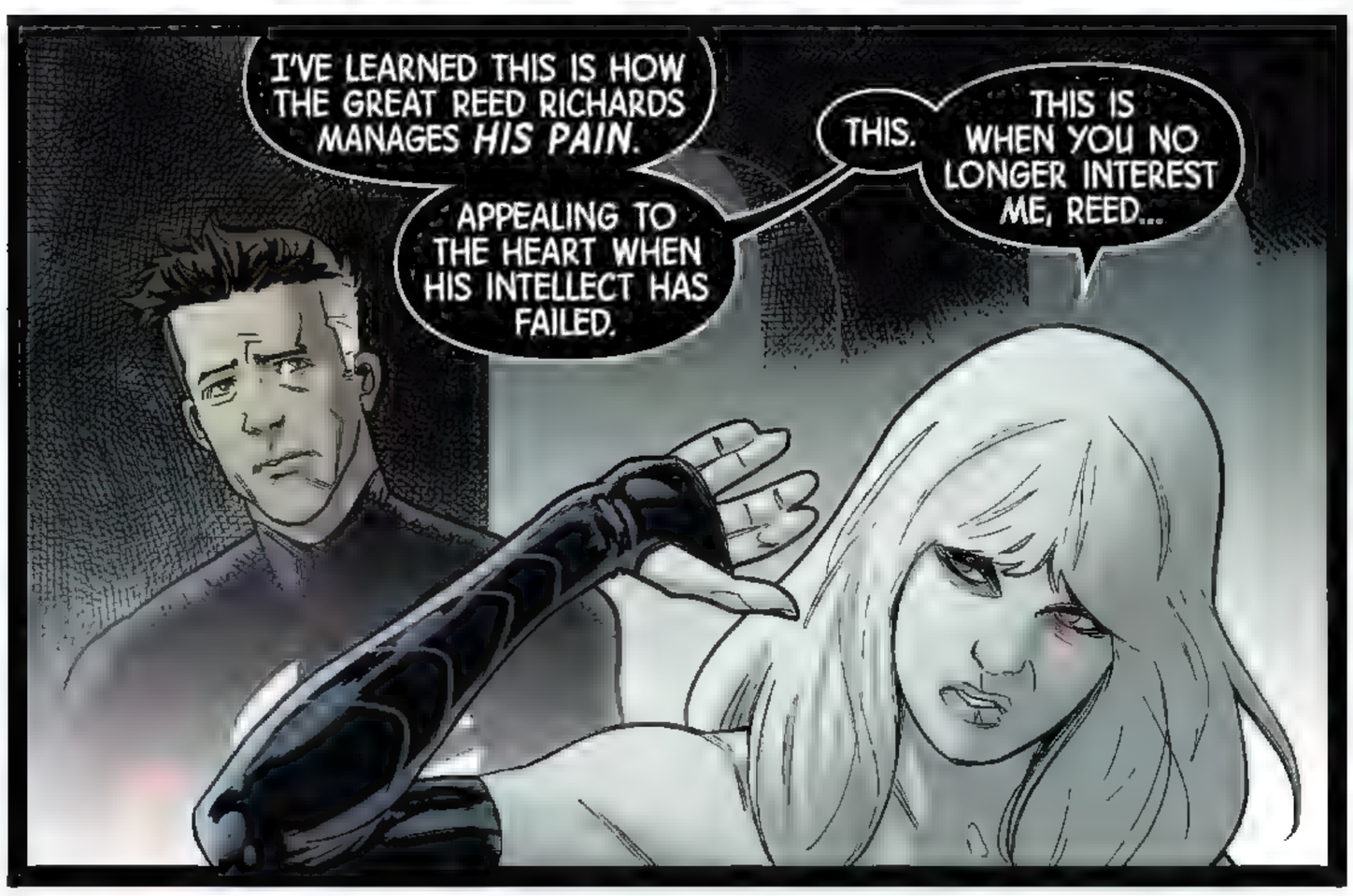
OH MY... HE DIDN'T DISAPPOINT, DID HE?

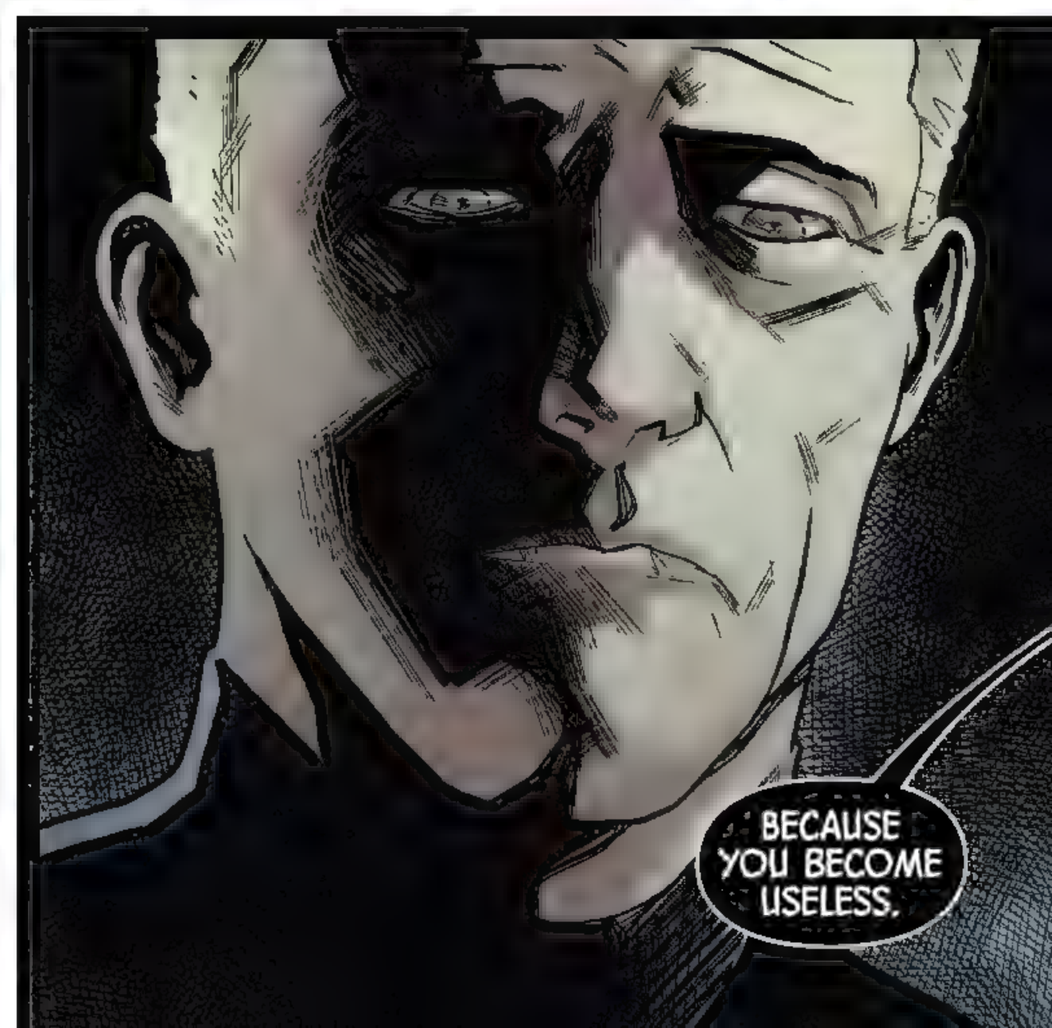
THEN.
WANT TO TELL ME WHAT THAT WAS ABOUT?


A MAN COMING TO THE END OF HIMSELF.


YOU DO KNOW THAT THERE'S NOTHING ABNORMAL ABOUT HOW HUMAN BEINGS RESPOND TO TRAUMA, DON'T YOU, SWAN?
THIS JUDGING PEOPLE FOR THEIR WEAKNESSES IN THE FACE OF TRAGEDY-- IT'S COUNTER TO EVERYTHING WE KNOW ABOUT HOW PEOPLE DEAL WITH PAIN.

ARE YOU SAYING THAT ANTHONY IS IN PAIN?
WE ALL ARE, INCLUDING YOU. YOU'VE JUST BEEN HURTING A LOT LONGER...AND IT'S MADE YOU MUCH, MUCH HARDER.
I'VE SAID IT BEFORE, AND I'LL SAY IT AGAIN...I CAN HELP YOU.
YOU KNOW I HAVE KNOWN OTHER YOUS...AND I HAVE HEARD THEM SAY SIMILAR THINGS...
AND?

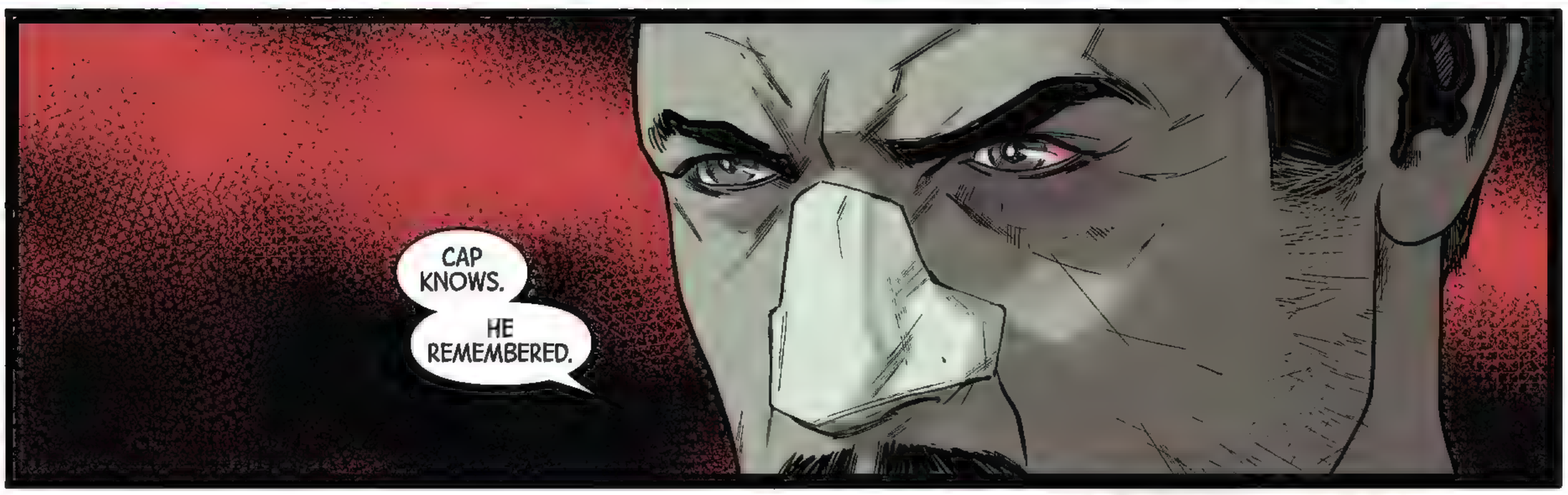

I'VE LEARNED THIS IS HOW THE GREAT REED RICHARDS MANAGES HIS PAIN.
APPEALING TO THE HEART WHEN HIS INTELLECT HAS FAILED.
THIS.
THIS IS WHEN YOU NO LONGER INTEREST ME, REED...

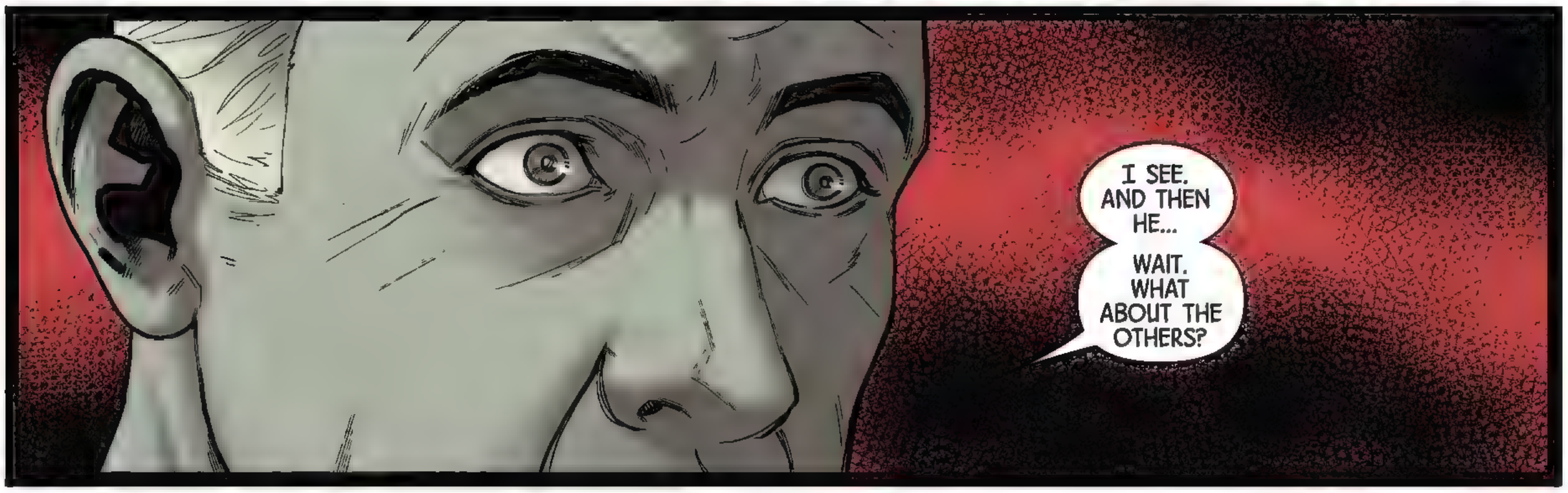

BECAUSE YOU BECOME USELESS.

WAIT UP, TONY.
NOT NOW, REED.

HEY!
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?
WHAT HAPPENED TO *YOUR FACE?*

AND WHAT WAS THAT BACK THERE WITH THE ULTIMATUM AND THE COERCION ROUTINE? I'VE NEVER SEEN...WHAT I MEAN IS, THAT'S NOT HOW WE--
WE'RE RUNNING OUT OF TIME.
WE'VE BEEN RUNNING OUT OF TIME SINCE THIS STARTED. I'M JUST AS TIRED AS YOU ARE, BUT--


CAP KNOWS.
HE REMEMBERED.


I SEE. AND THEN HE...
WAIT. WHAT ABOUT THE OTHERS?

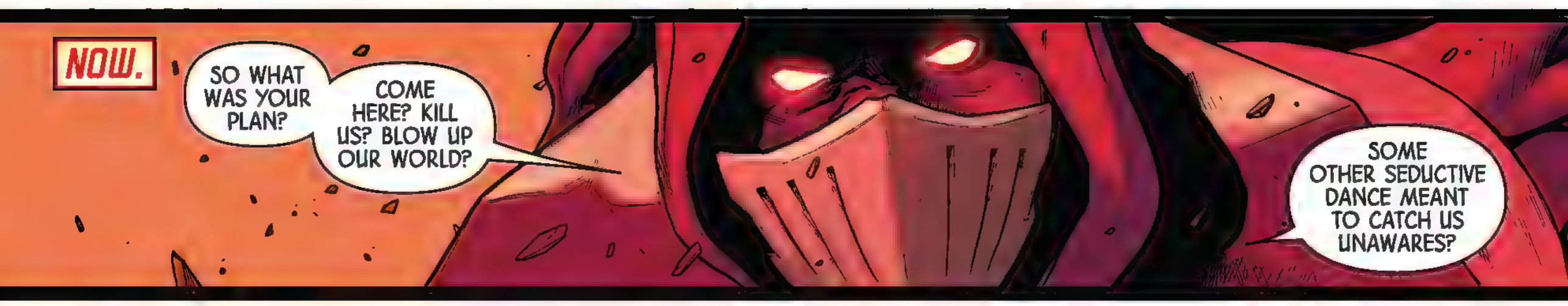
YES.
WHAT ABOUT THE OTHERS?
ILIENT

THERE'S NO GOING BACK NOW.
AND GOING FORWARD...MY GOD, THE FULL WEIGHT OF THE MOST POWERFUL AVENGERS TEAM EVER ASSEMBLED IS GETTING READY TO COME CRASHING DOWN ON US.

SO THAT'S WHY, IN THERE, YOU WERE THREATENING TO DO WHAT YOU--
YEAH.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO ANY MORE... DO YOU?

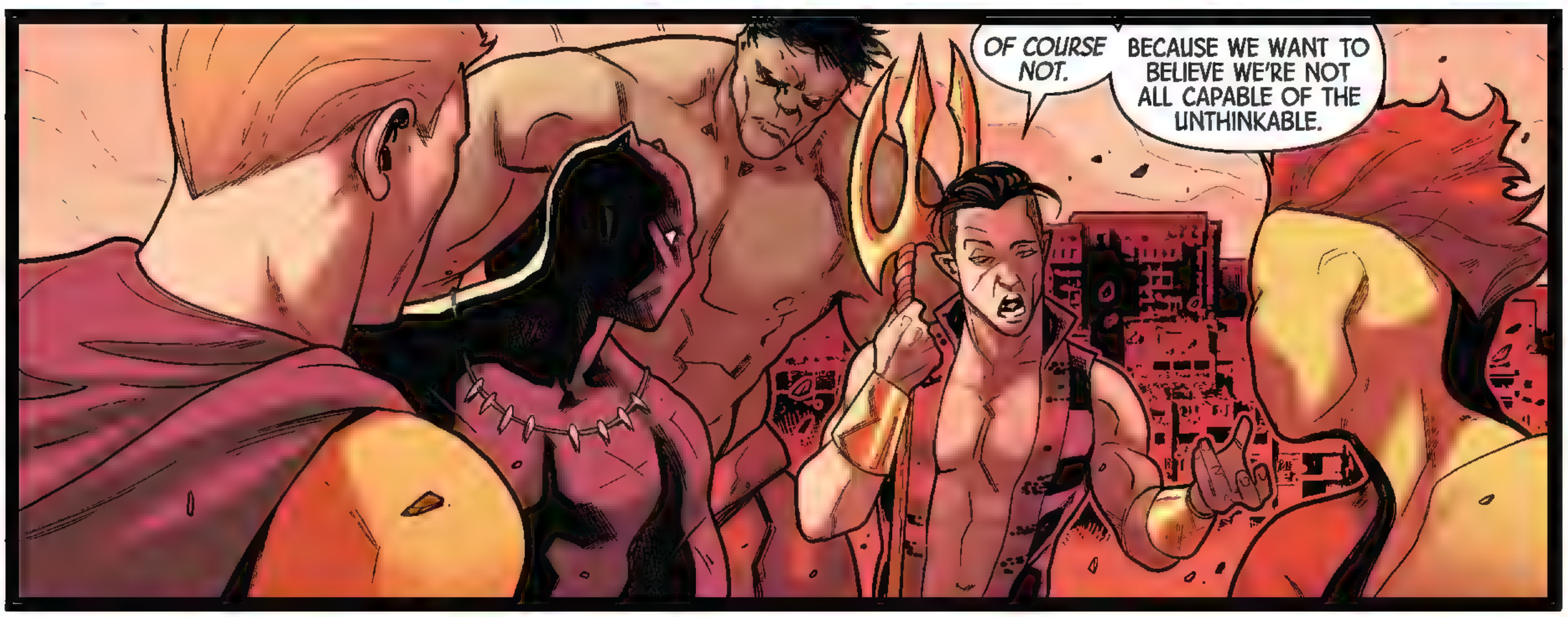
BEYOND OUR CONTINGENCIES--THE NIGHTMARE SCENARIOS THAT WE'RE MOVING TOWARDS? NO.
THE WORST PART IS THEY'LL BE RIGHTEOUS IN COMING AFTER US. WE'VE DONE TERRIBLE THINGS, ANTHONY.

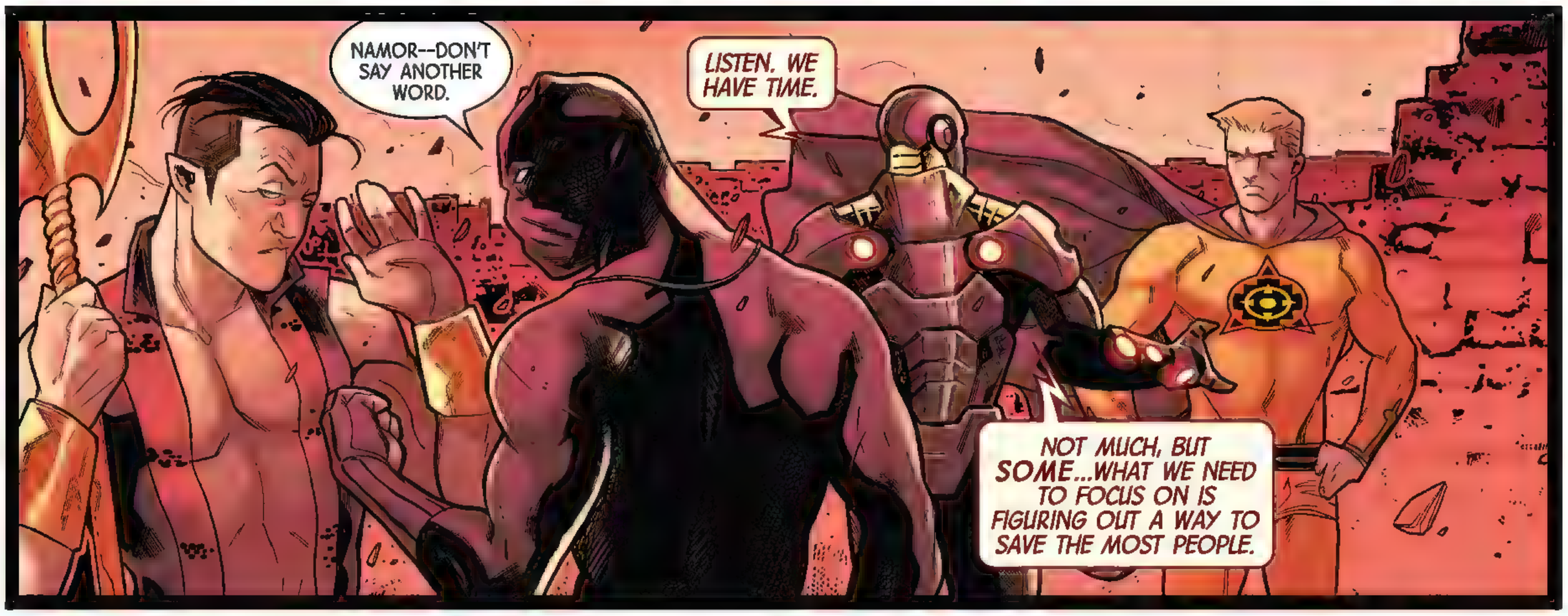
AND THE WORST OF IT ALL...
WE CAN'T STOP, CAN WE?


NOW.
SO WHAT WAS YOUR PLAN?
COME HERE? KILL US? BLOW UP OUR WORLD?
SOME OTHER SEDUCTIVE DANCE MEANT TO CATCH US UNAWARES?

WAYNE, I'M SURE THAT--
NO. WE NEED TO KNOW THIS. NOW.
ARE YOU HERE TO KILL OUR WORLD?

OF COURSE NOT.


OF COURSE NOT.
BECAUSE WE WANT TO BELIEVE WE'RE NOT ALL CAPABLE OF THE UNTHINKABLE.

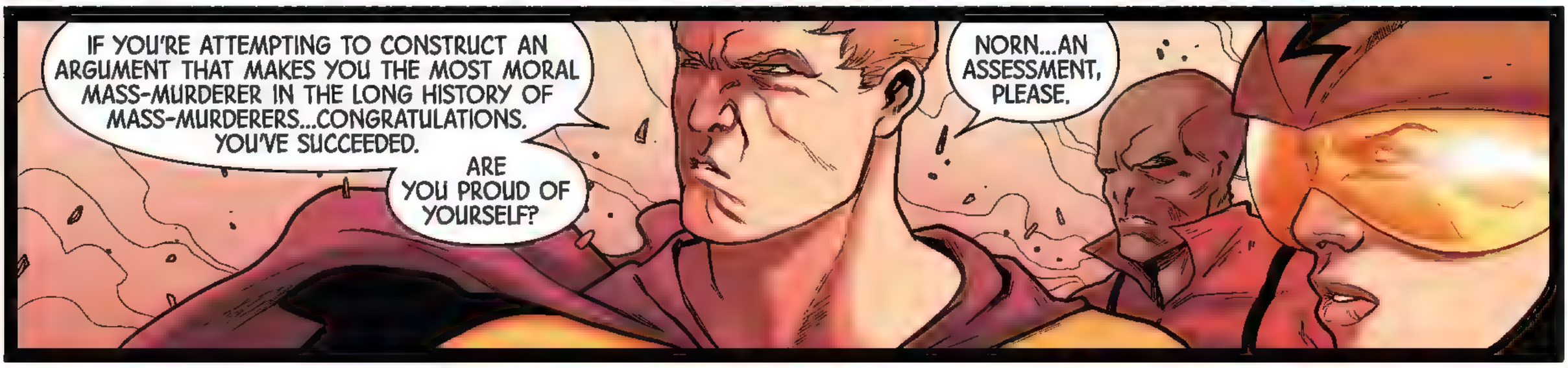

NAMOR--DON'T SAY ANOTHER WORD.
LISTEN. WE HAVE TIME.
NOT MUCH, BUT SOME...WHAT WE NEED TO FOCUS ON IS FIGURING OUT A WAY TO SAVE THE MOST PEOPLE.

HONESTLY, WHAT ELSE *COULD* IT BE?

TWO UNIVERSES COLLIDING AT THE TOUCH POINT OF EARTHS--THE ONLY WAY TO SAVE THEM IS FOR ONE OF THOSE EARTHS TO BE DESTROYED...SAVING BOTH UNIVERSES.

AND A SINGLE EARTH.

ALL THAT REMAINS IS CHOOSING WHICH ONE. IT WOULD BE WRONG--IT WOULD BE *IMMORAL*--NOT TO MAKE A CHOICE.



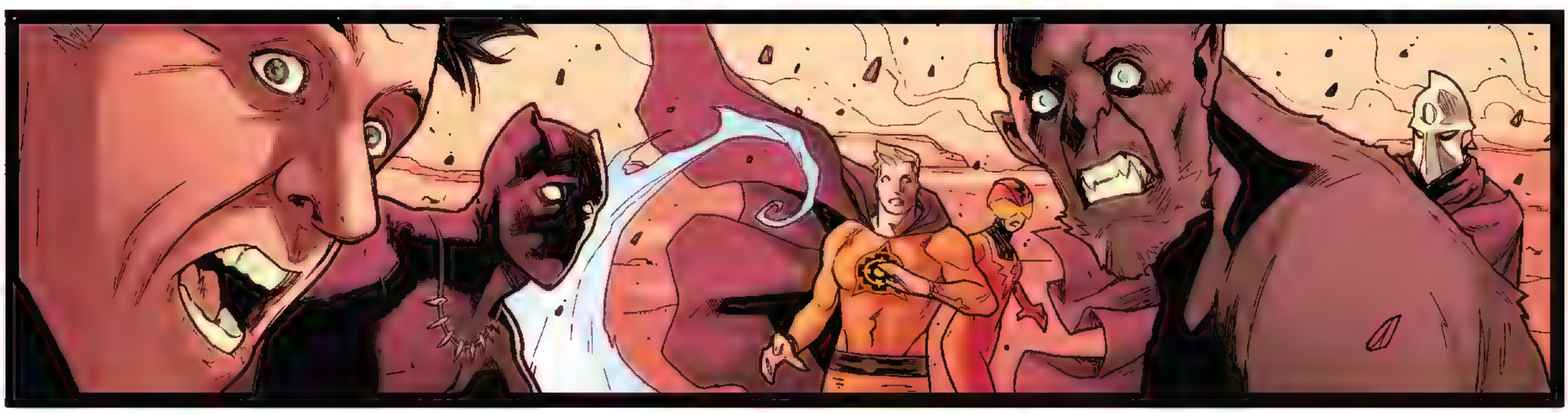
THERE ARE NO LIES HERE. ONLY REGRET.

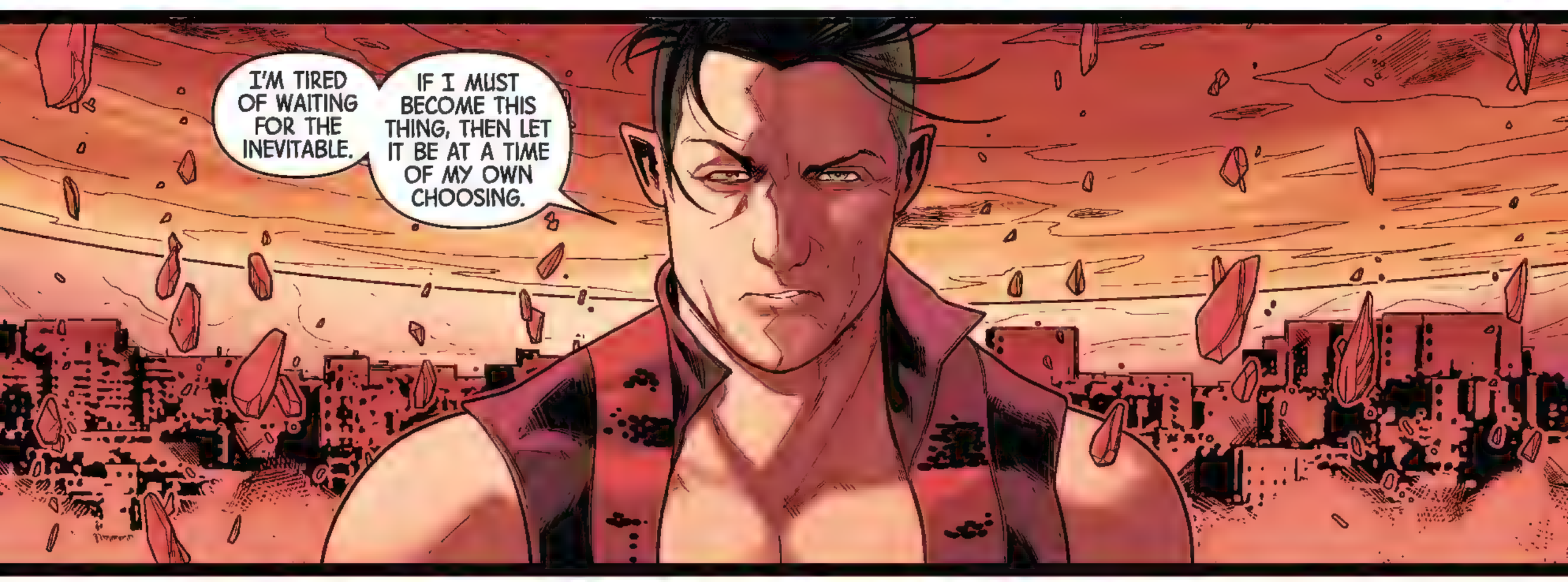
THERE IS A SHADE OVER THESE MEN'S SOULS...BUT THAT HAS NOT ALWAYS BEEN THE CASE. HOWEVER, NOW THEY GRAVITATE TO THE NIGHT.

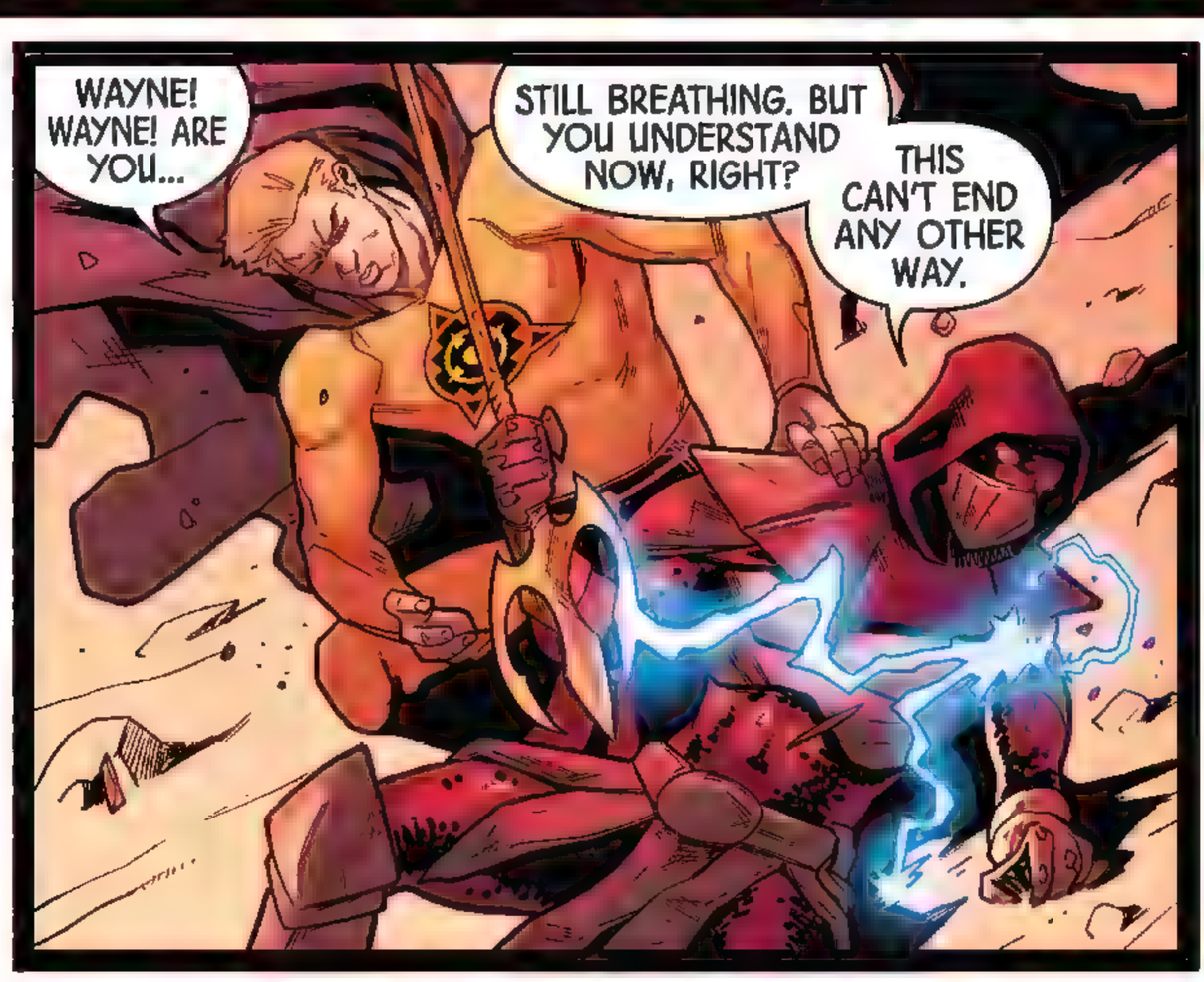
GREAT BUILDERS OF WEAPONS. MACHINES OF DESTRUCTION. WORDS OF POWER. SOUNDS OF FURY.

A STORM TO CONSUME US ALL...
SO YOU'RE PROPOSING WHAT, EXACTLY?
THAT WE WORK TOGETHER TO FIND SOME SOLUTION OVER THE NEXT HOUR, AND IF WE DO NOT FIND ONE, WE MOVE ON TO WORST-CASE SCENARIOS.
LET'S DO THAT.
NO. I WANT TO TALK ABOUT YOUR... WORST-CASE SCENARIOS.
LET'S ASSUME WE FAIL. TELL ME WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN.
SOMETHING TERRIBLE.
BE MORE SPECIFIC.
IN ORDER TO SAVE BOTH UNIVERSES... AN EARTH HAS TO DIE. YOU KNOW THIS.
I DO... BUT WHICH EARTH?
I DON'T KNOW.
I THINK YOU DO...BUT EVEN IF YOU DON'T...
GIVE ME YOUR BEST GUESS.
DO YOU HAVE THE POWER TO DESTROY A PLANET?
NO. BUT YOU DO.
YES. WE DO.
BUT WE SHOULD BE--
NO! BECAUSE IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT...THERE'S ONLY ONE OF TWO OPTIONS: YOU KILL OUR EARTH...OR YOU KILL YOUR OWN.
SO YOU LISTEN TO ME! YOU'RE NOT KILLING OUR WORLD, NOT WHILE I STILL BREATHE...
NOT WHILE ANY OF US DO!

THUNK!




I'M TIRED OF WAITING FOR THE INEVITABLE.
IF I MUST BECOME THIS THING, THEN LET IT BE AT A TIME OF MY OWN CHOOSING.


WAYNE! WAYNE! ARE YOU...
STILL BREATHING. BUT YOU UNDERSTAND NOW, RIGHT?
THIS CAN'T END ANY OTHER WAY.

YES.

OH, GOD...
THIS IS IT.

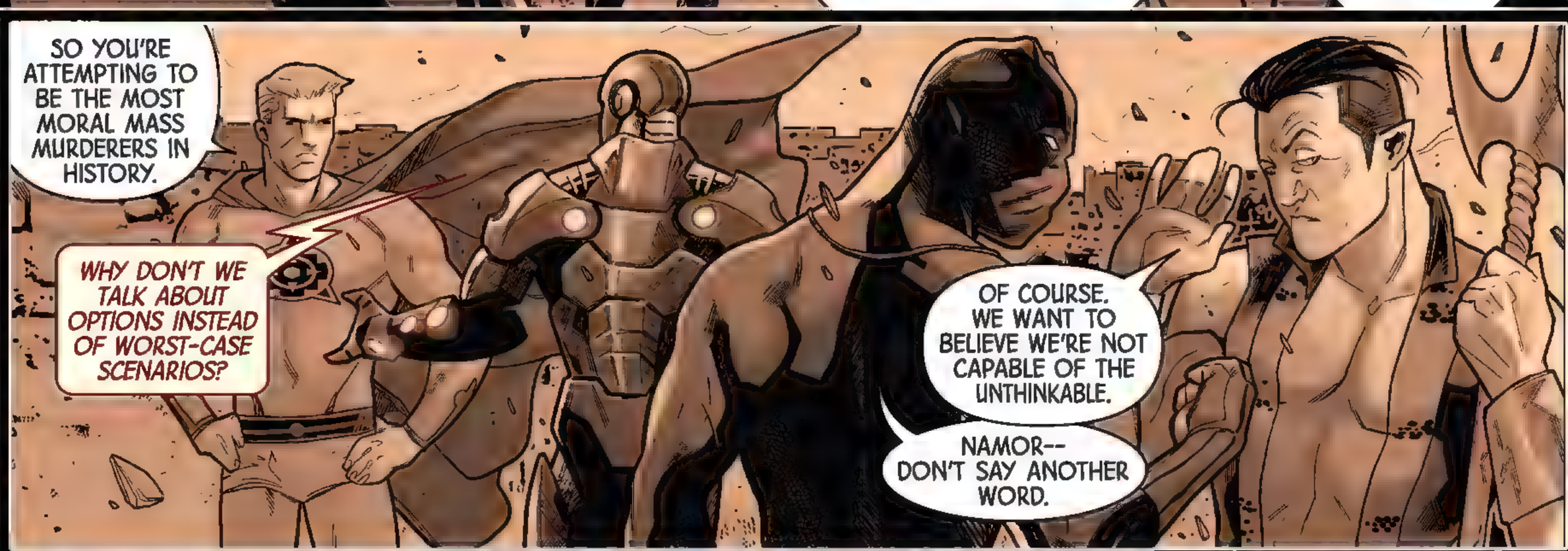
NEW AVENGERS

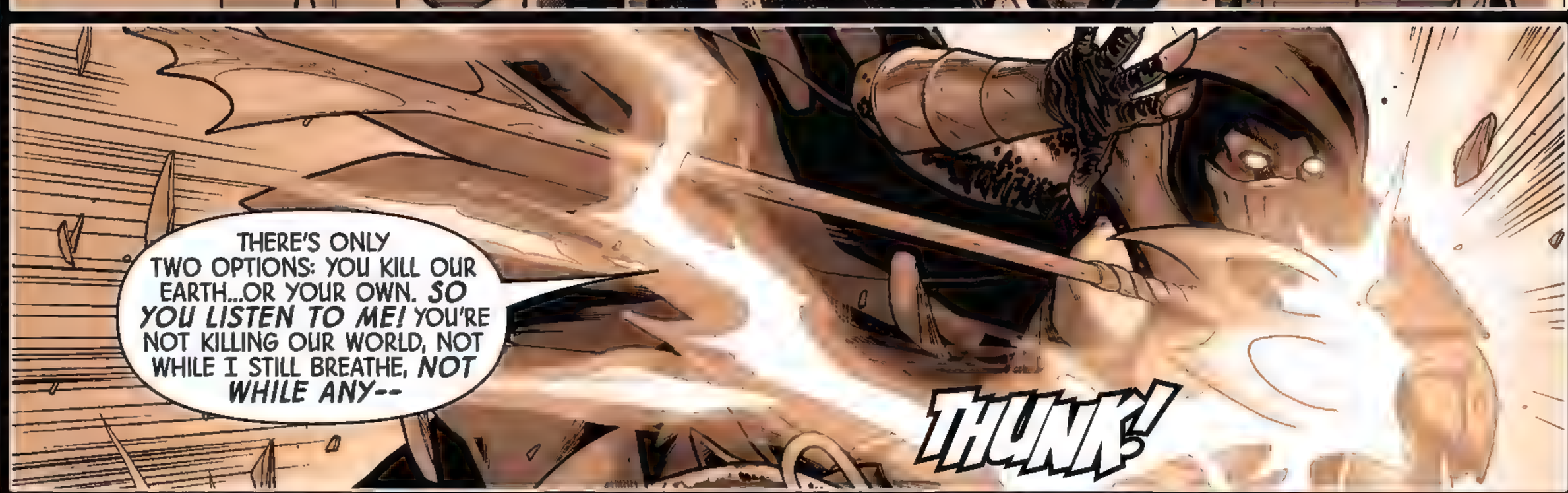
ALL-NEW MARVEL NOW!

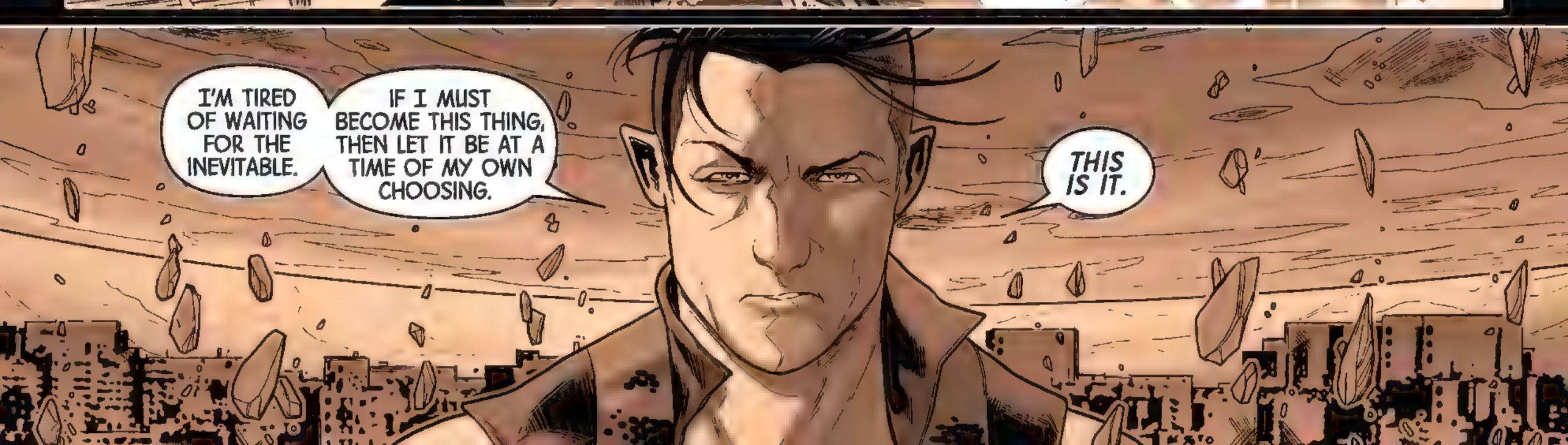
HICKMAN
SCHITI
MARTIN

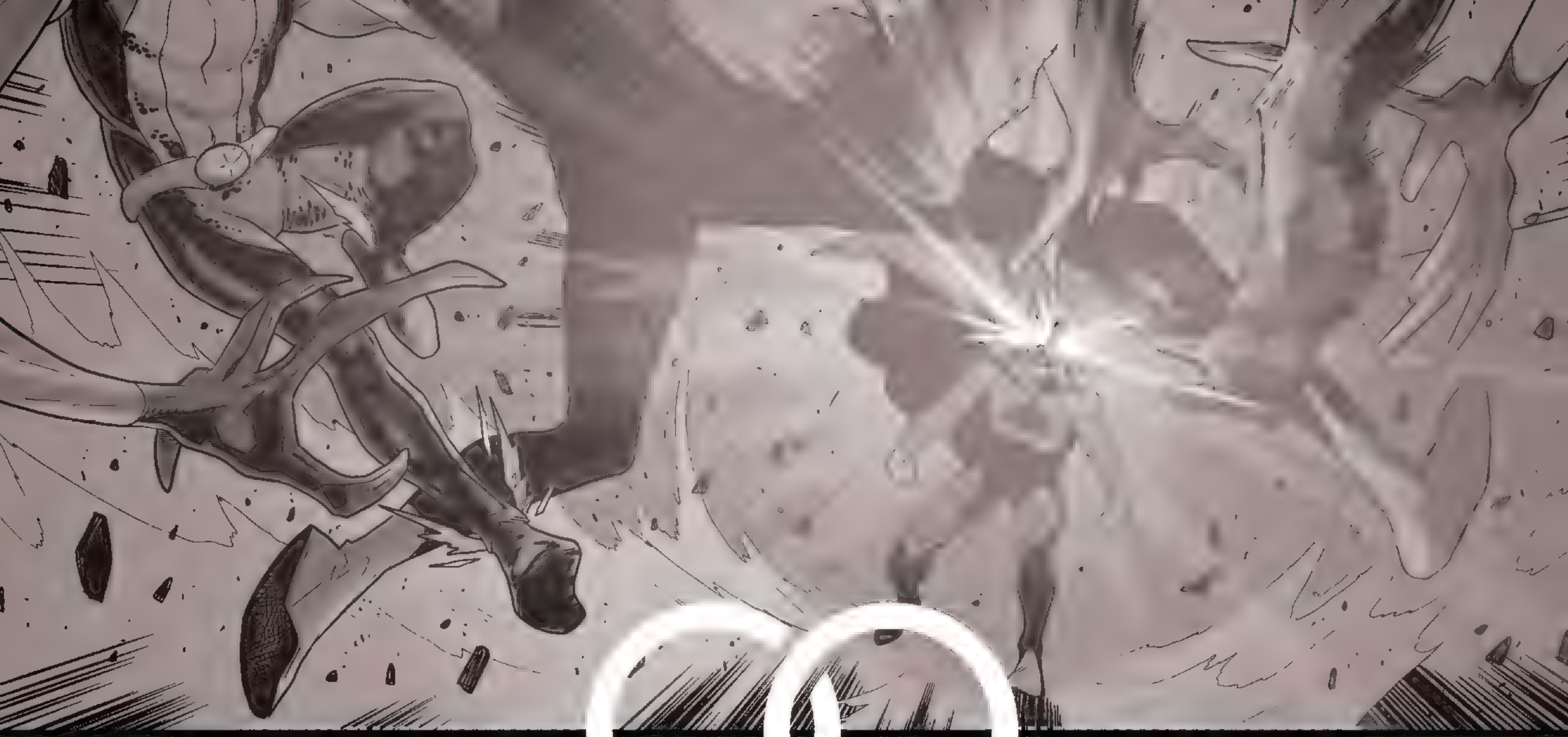
020

PREVIOUSLY IN NEW AVENGERS









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"BLU'DAKORR"

WRITER: JONATHAN HICKMAN
ARTIST: VALERIO SCHITI

COLOR ARTISTS: FRANK MARTIN & PAUL MOUNTS
LETTERER: VC's JOE CARAMAGNA
COVER ART: DUSTIN WEAVER & JASON KEITH

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THE ILLUMINATI

BLACK BOLT
Celestial Messiah

NAMOR
Imperius Rex

REED RICHARDS
Universal Builder

IRON MAN
Master of Machines

BEAST
Mutant Genius

DOCTOR STRANGE
Sorcerer Supreme

BLACK PANTHER
King of the Dead

HULK
Strongest There Is

THE GREAT SOCIETY

BOUNDLESS

DR. SPECTRUM

SUN GOD

THE RIDER

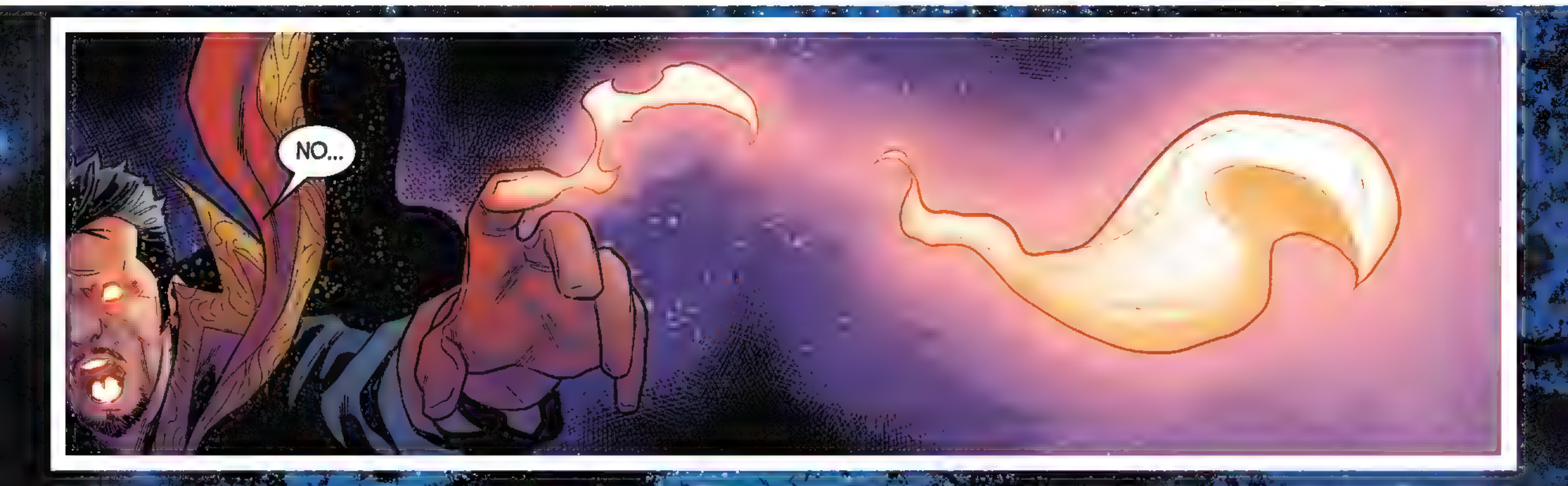
THE JOVIAN

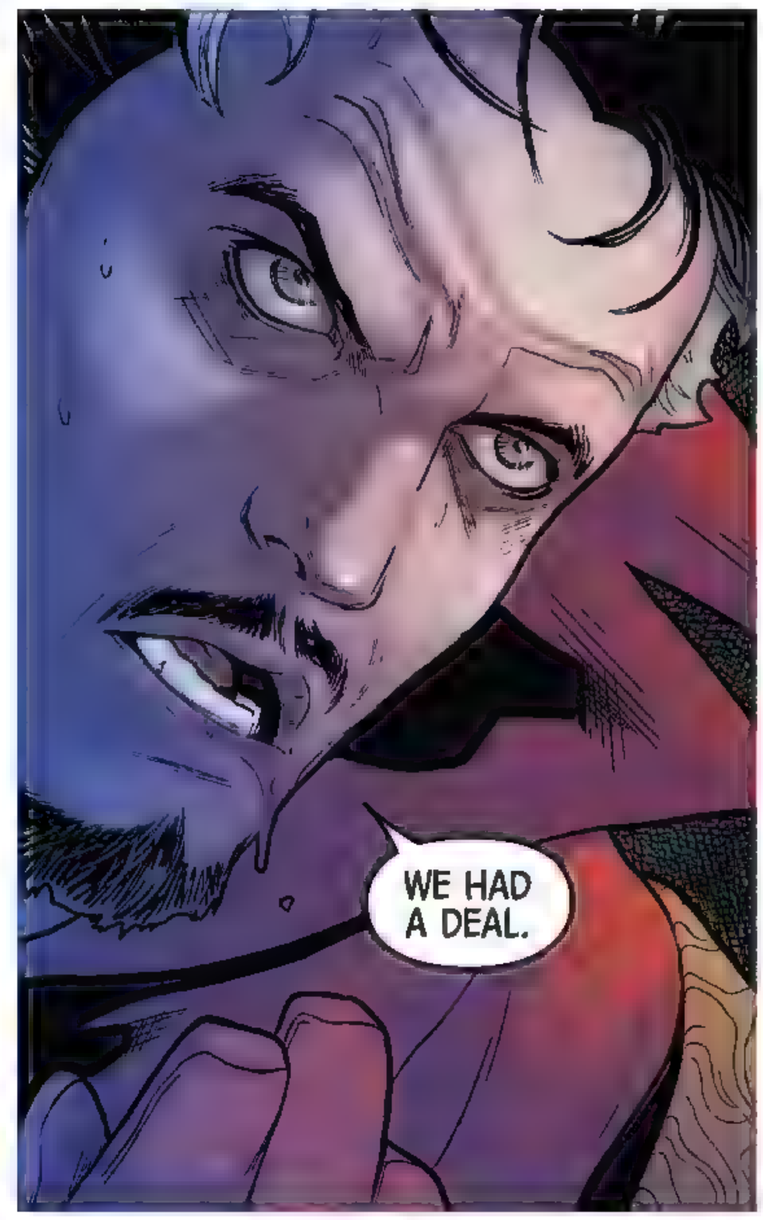
THE NORN

ARE YOU SELLING YOUR SOUL, STEPHEN?
I AM.
THEN.
HOW MUCH?
HOW MUCH OF YOUR SOUL DO YOU SELL THIS DAY?
ALL OF IT.

ALL. EVERYTHING.
THE GODHEAD.
YOURS...

IF YOU COULD PAY.


NO...



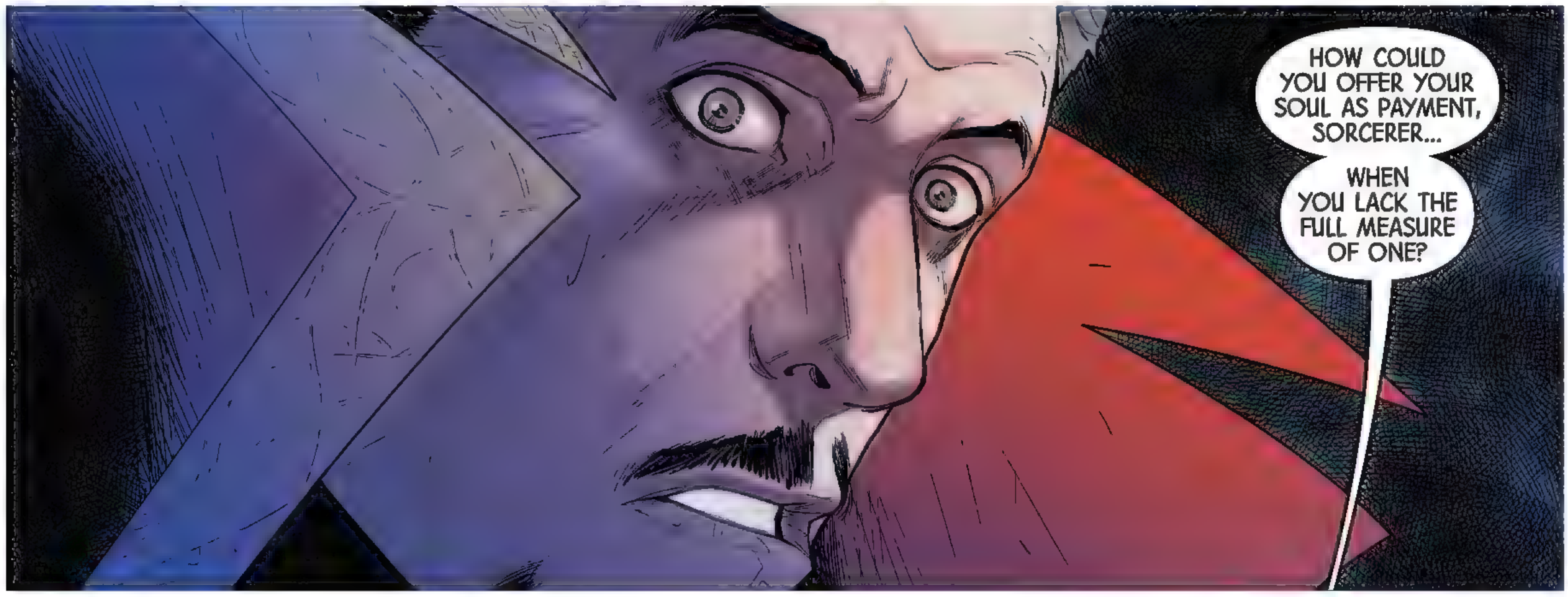
DEALS ARE SEALED WITH TRUST. A SURETY THAT WITHSTANDS THE TRANSACTION.

WHAT DO YOU CALL A DEAL WHERE ONE SIDE CANNOT MEET THE OBLIGATIONS?

NO DEAL AT ALL.

STEPHEN STRANGE...YOU ARE A DEBTOR. INSOLVENT.

A BANKRUPT LIAR.

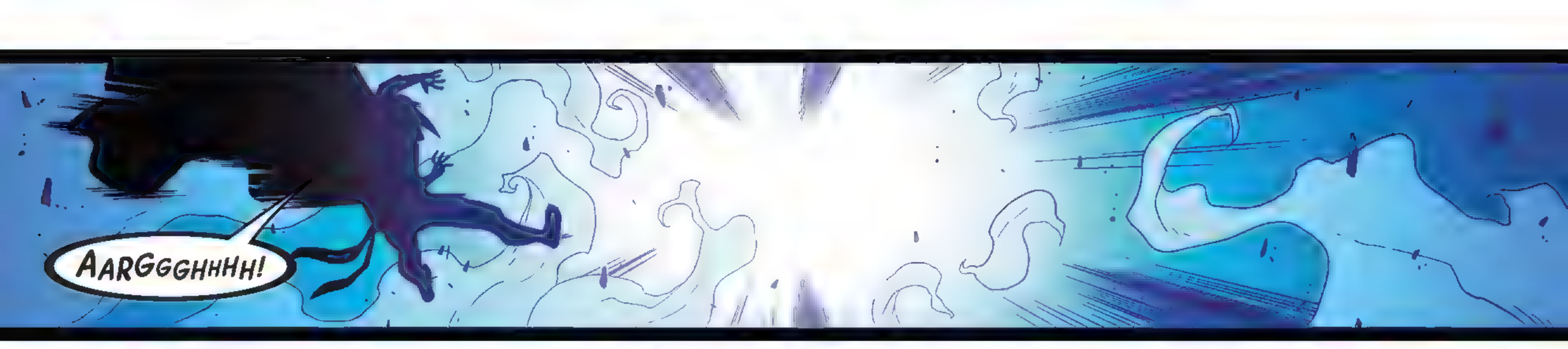


NOW.

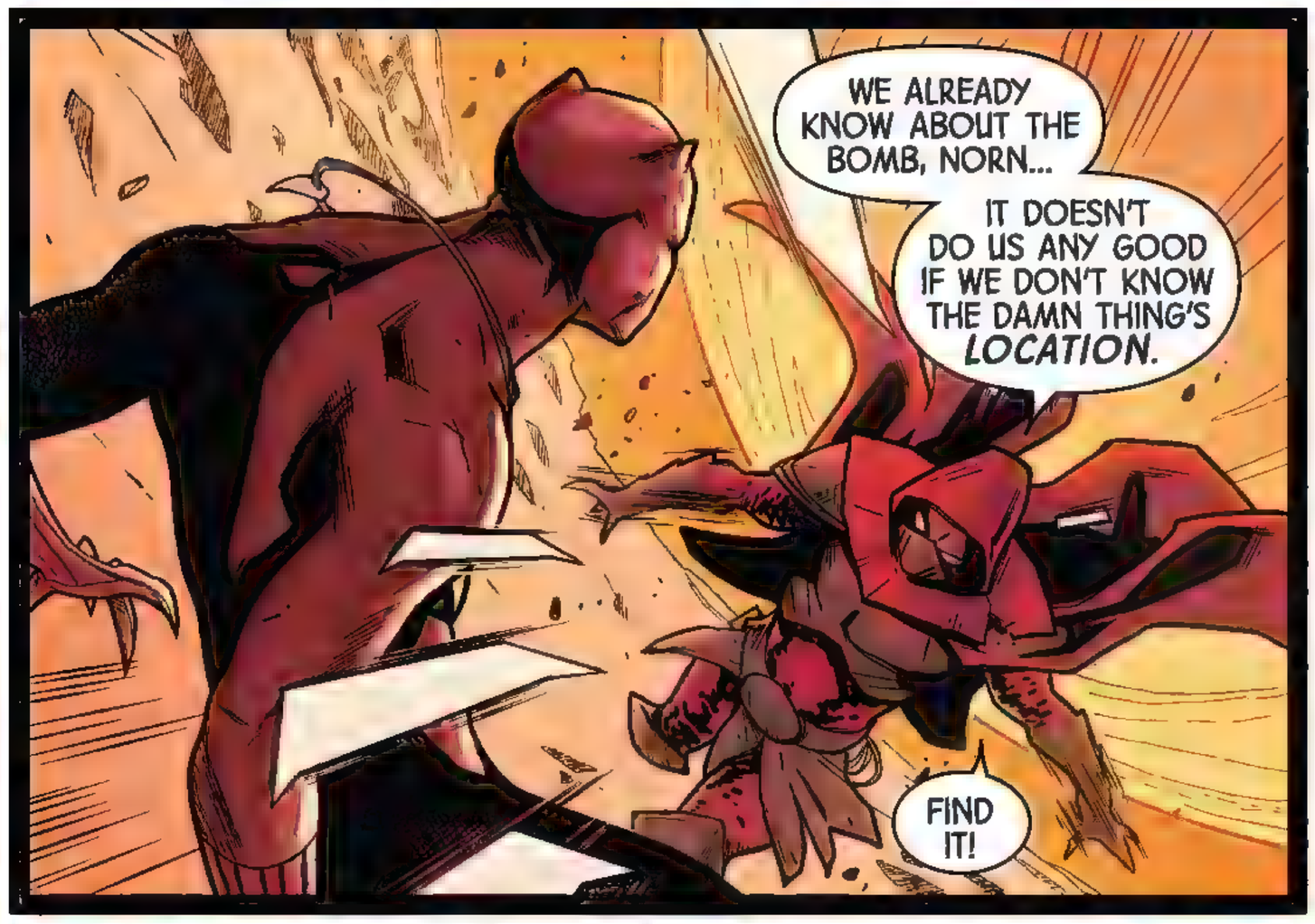
WE'RE COMMITTED NOW...HERE THEY COME!

STEPHEN!

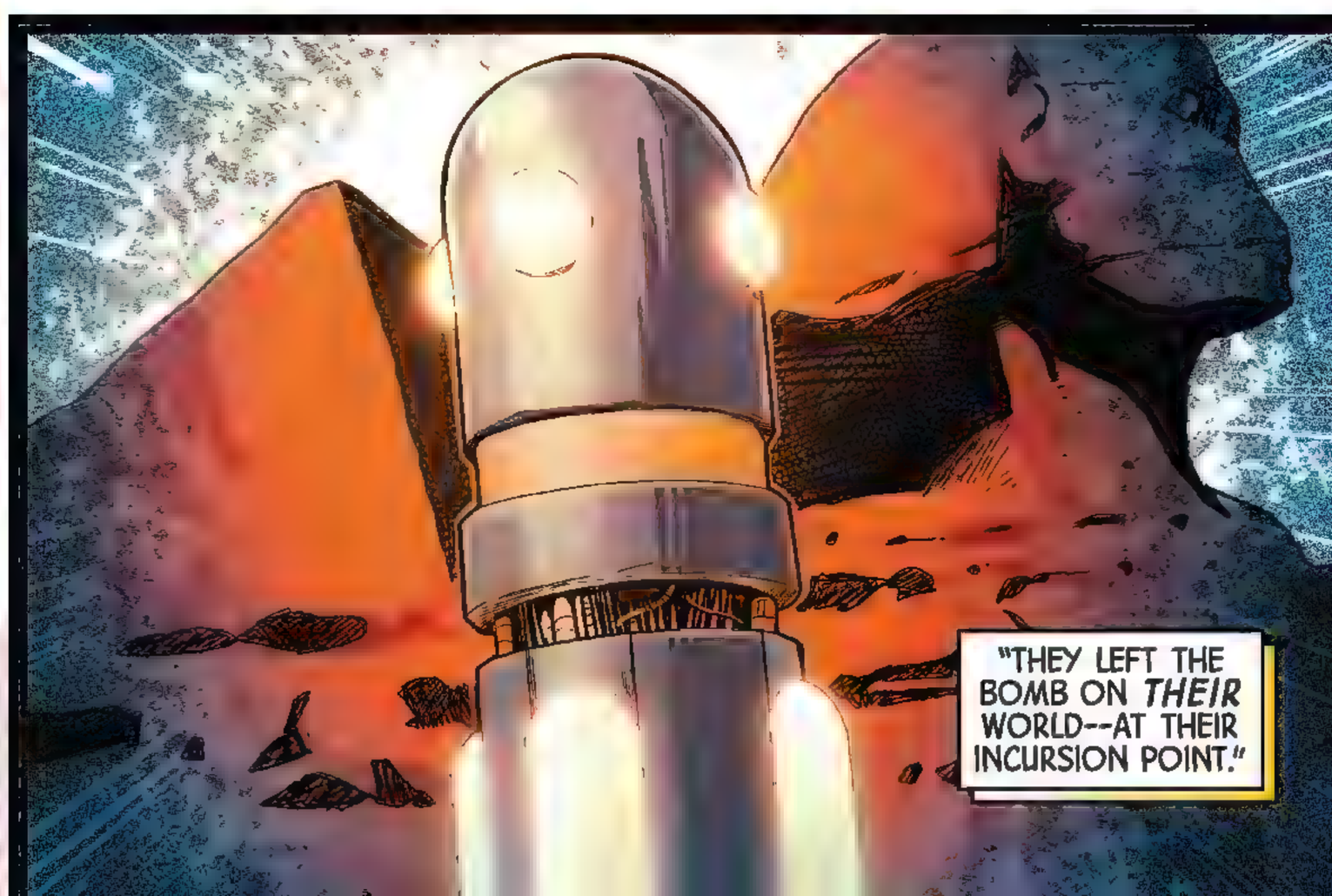
WHAT'S THE STATUS OF HANK AND REED?


AARGGGHHHH!

THIS ONE... HAS POWER BUT DOES NOT GUARD HIS MIND. WITHIN I SEE A POISONED HEART. I SEE TWISTED THOUGHTS.
I SEE PLANS. DARK PLANS.
I SEE THEIR WEAPON.


WE ALREADY KNOW ABOUT THE BOMB, NORN...
IT DOESN'T DO US ANY GOOD IF WE DON'T KNOW THE DAMN THING'S LOCATION.
FIND IT!

FARCASTING THE SPHERE YIELDS NO RESONANCE.
HOW DO YOU HIDE SOMETHING THAT IS SOMETHING AND NOT NOTHING?
UNLESS... YES...
THE SECOND SPHERE.


"THEY LEFT THE BOMB ON THEIR WORLD--AT THEIR INCURSION POINT."

FOR QUICK RETRIEVAL, NO DOUBT.
SPECTRUM! GO! NOW!

"YOU HAVE TO DESTROY THE BOMB!"

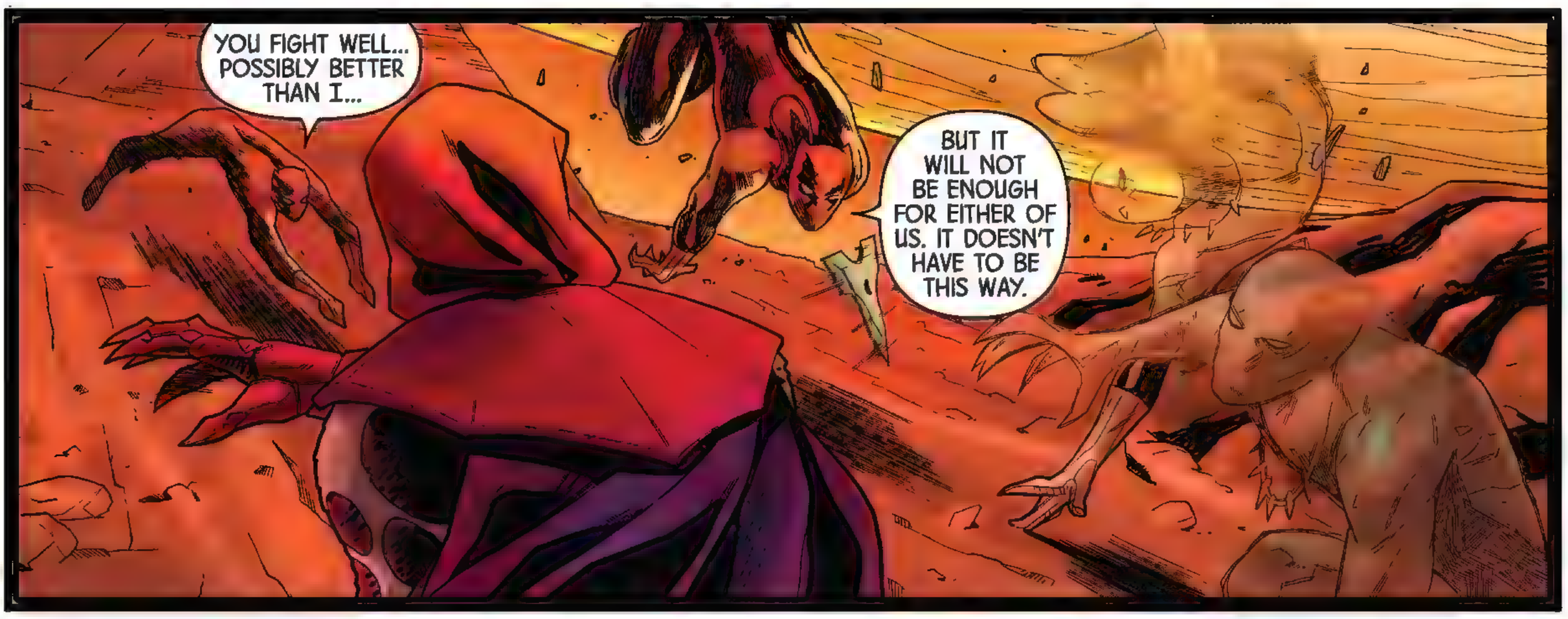
I'M ON IT...
BUT I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE, I SEE.

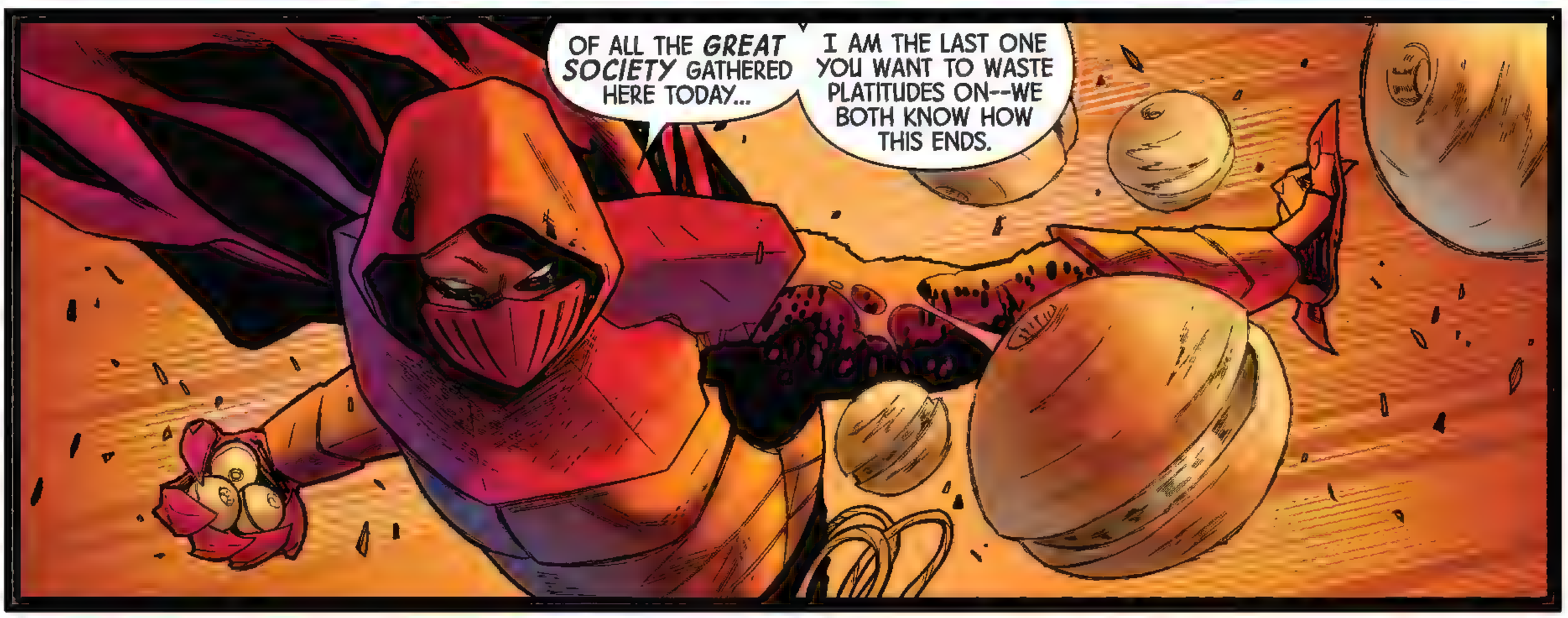
HURK!

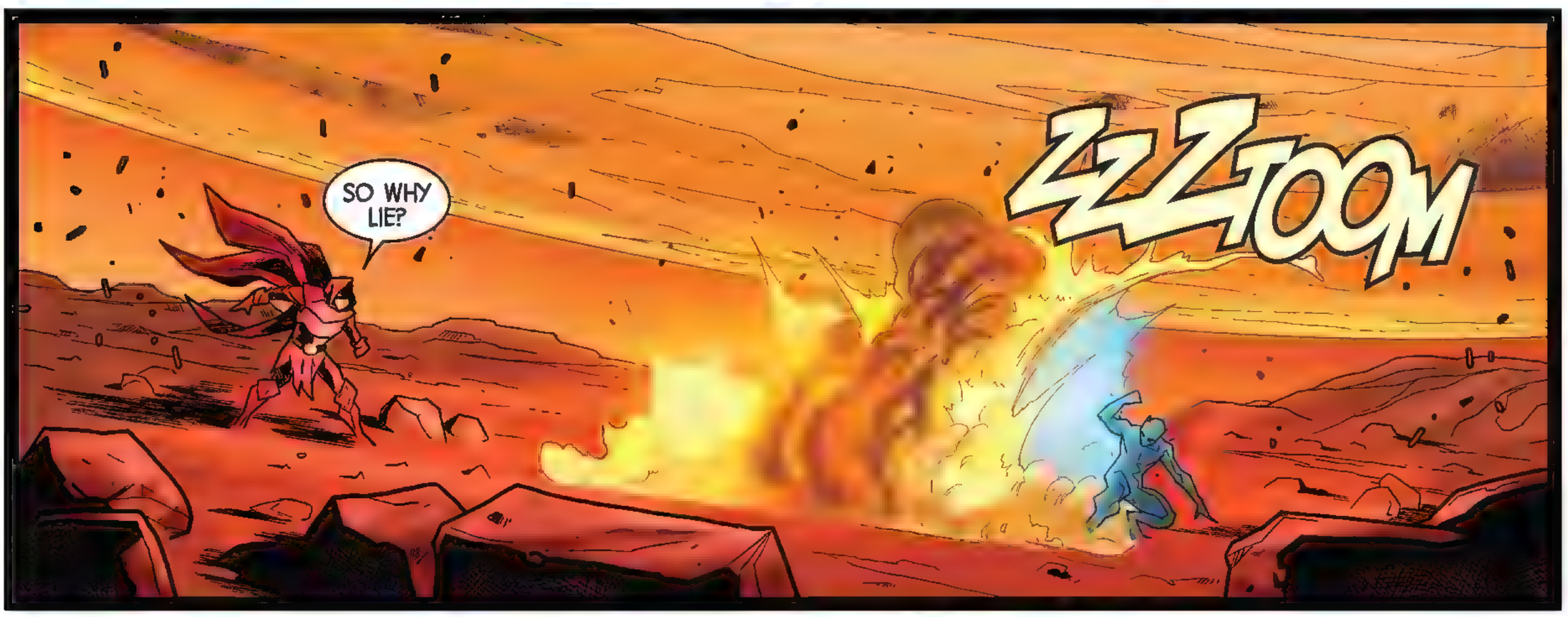
YES. THE PAIN IS UNFORTUNATE... BUT THAT'S WHAT IT'S COME TO, HASN'T IT?

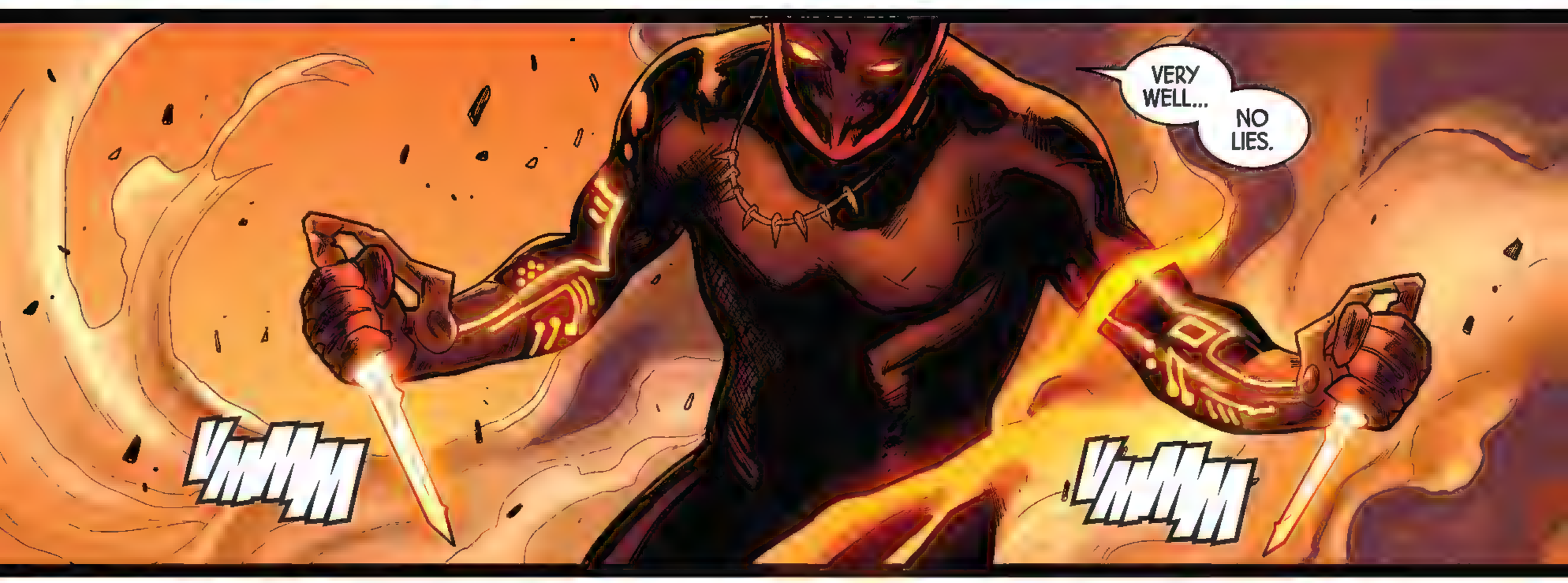
I FEEL SORRY FOR YOU.

AND THE WRETCHED END YOU MUST HAVE WAITING FOR YOU.


YOU FIGHT WELL... POSSIBLY BETTER THAN I...
BUT IT WILL NOT BE ENOUGH FOR EITHER OF US. IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THIS WAY.


OF ALL THE *GREAT SOCIETY* GATHERED HERE TODAY...
I AM THE LAST ONE YOU WANT TO WASTE PLATITUDES ON--WE BOTH KNOW HOW THIS ENDS.

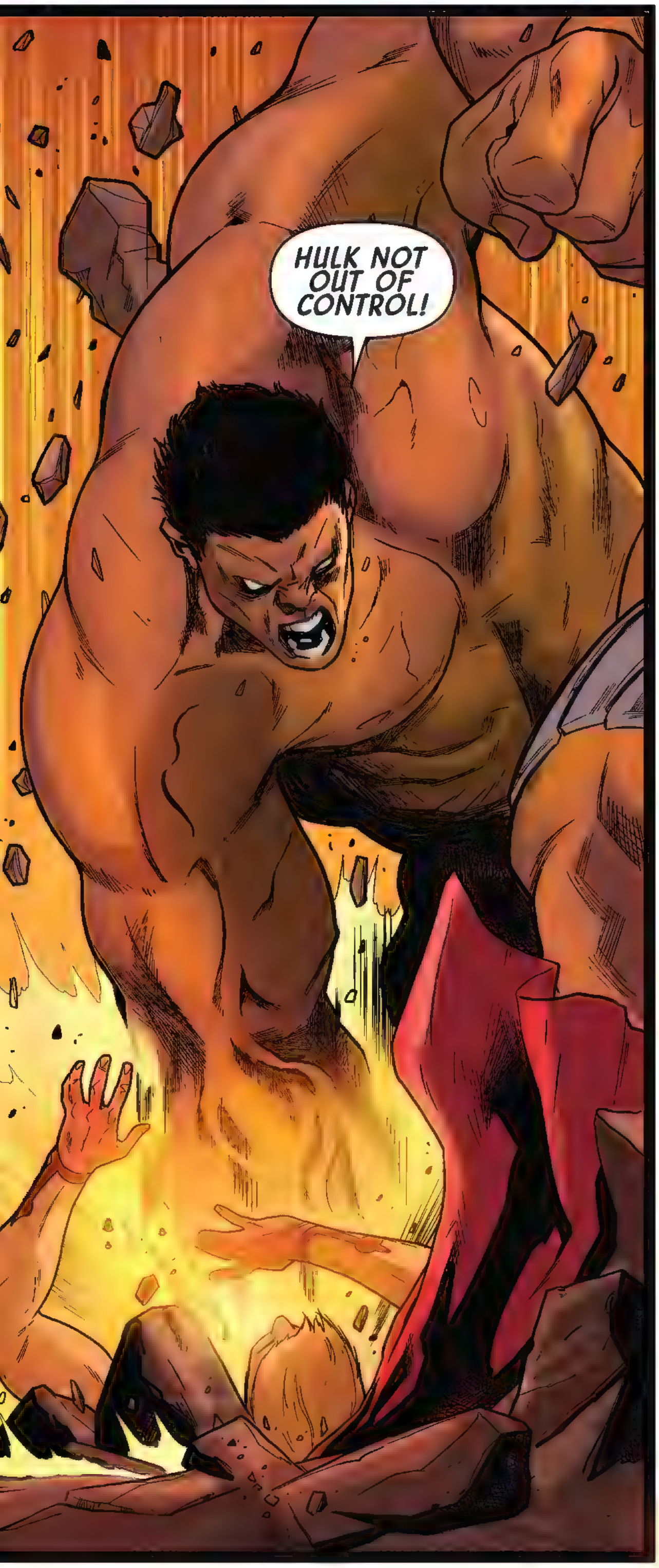

SO WHY LIE?
ZZZTOOM


VERY WELL...
NO LIES.
VMMM
VMMM

THERE WILL BE DEATH HERE TODAY.
BA-BOOOOM!
YUH...YES, THERE WILL BE...
BUT I DO NOT THINK *YOU OR I* STAND MUCH CHANCE OF SURVIVING.
HOW COULD ANYONE SURVIVE SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
THEN PERHAPS YOU SHOULD ASK YOURSELF...
IF IT'S THE END, AND THE END IS ASSURED...

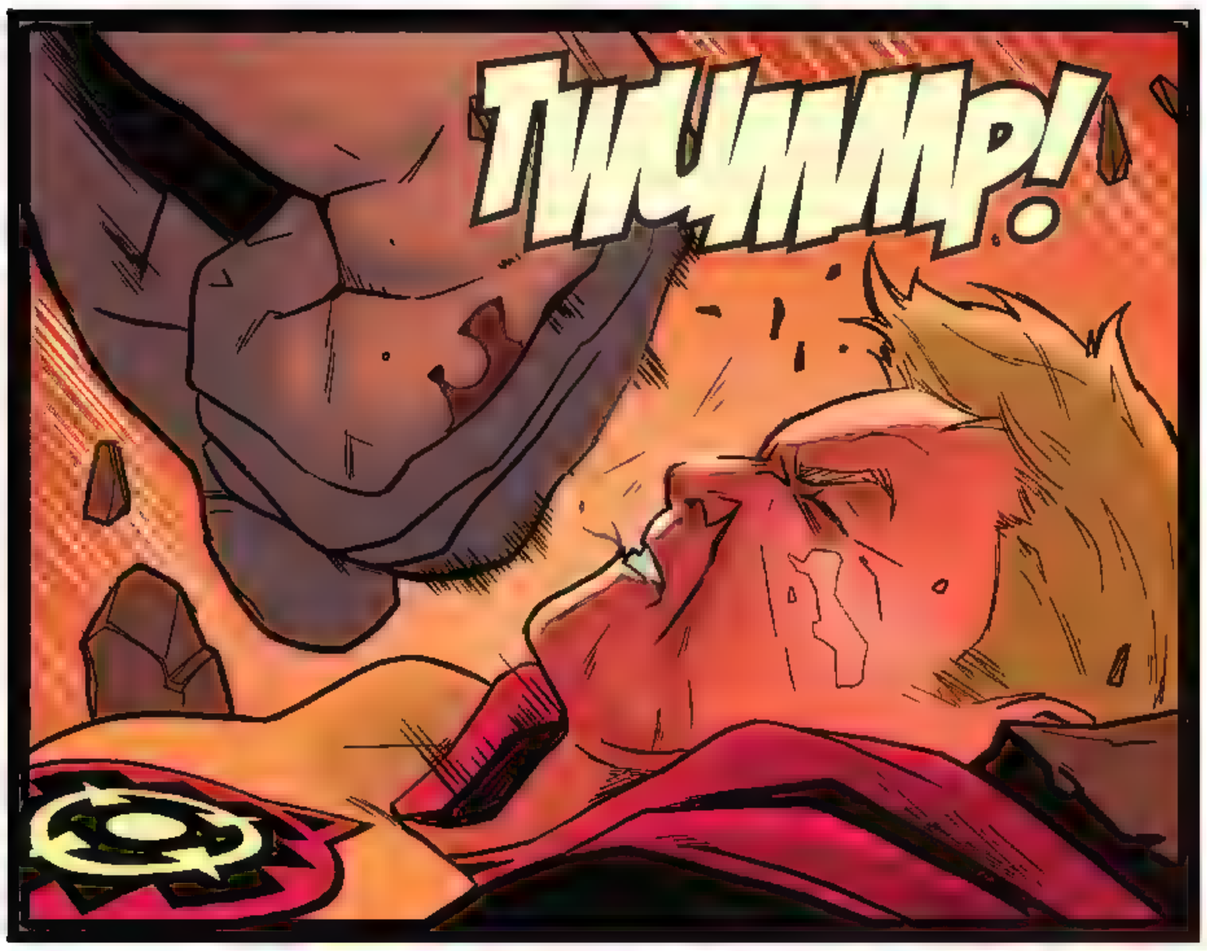
DOES IT MATTER HOW WE GO?
IT DOES TO ME.
KSSSH
AND I AS WELL.
TO THE END, THEN... THE VERY EN--
OOOFFF!
RAARRRRR!

LOOK AT YOU...POWERFUL... RECKLESS AND DANGEROUS.
THE PERFECT EMBODIMENT OF WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE TRAIT YOU "HEROES" SHARE.
YOU'RE ALL *OUT OF CONTROL*...LIKE SOME CORRUPTED FORCE OF NATURE.

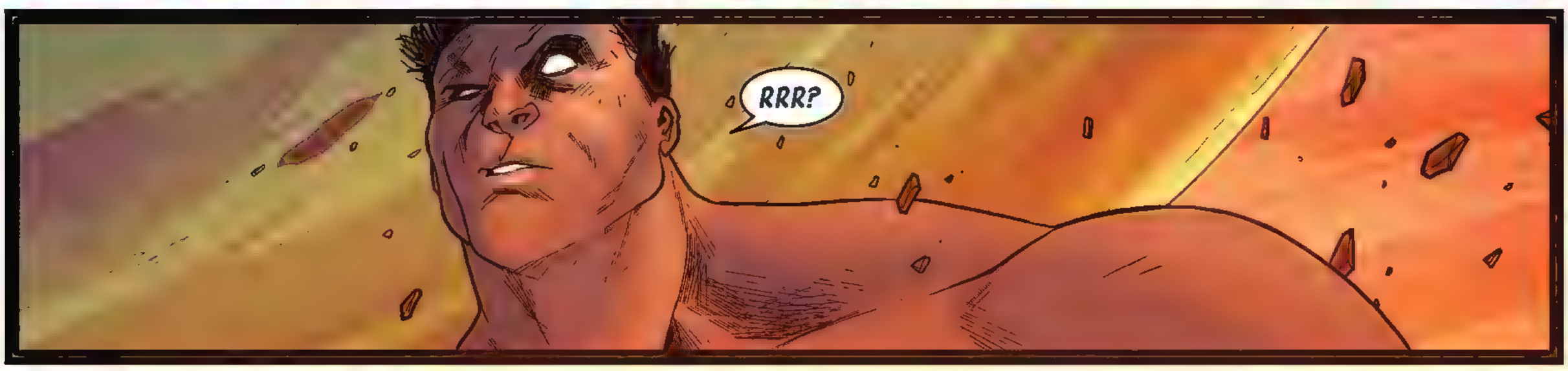

HULK NOT OUT OF CONTROL!

HULK NOT NATURE!

HULK IS THE STRONGEST ONE THERE IS!


TWUMMMP!

TWU--
MAYBE IN YOUR UNIVERSE, MONSTER...


RRR?

BUT NOT IN THIS ONE.

BLACK PANTHER: ENGAGED (STALEMATE)
NAMOR: ENGAGED (STALEMATE)
MISTER FANTASTIC: INACTIVE (UNCONSCIOUS)
BEAST: INACTIVE (UNCONSCIOUS)
HULK: INACTIVE (DEFEATED)
BLACK BOLT: DISENGAGED (OFFWORLD)
DOCTOR STRANGE: ENGAGED (UNKNOWN)
OH, GOD...
IRON MAN STATUS: ENGAGED
TARGET: BOUNDLESS.
(TRACKING SYSTEM / TARGETING OFFLINE)
(SYSTEM FAILURE IMMINENT)
DO YOU NEED ANY HELP, BOUNDLESS?

MISTER *SMART PERSON* HERE THINKS HE'S *SO VERY SMART* THAT HE CAN OUTTHINK EVERYTHING.

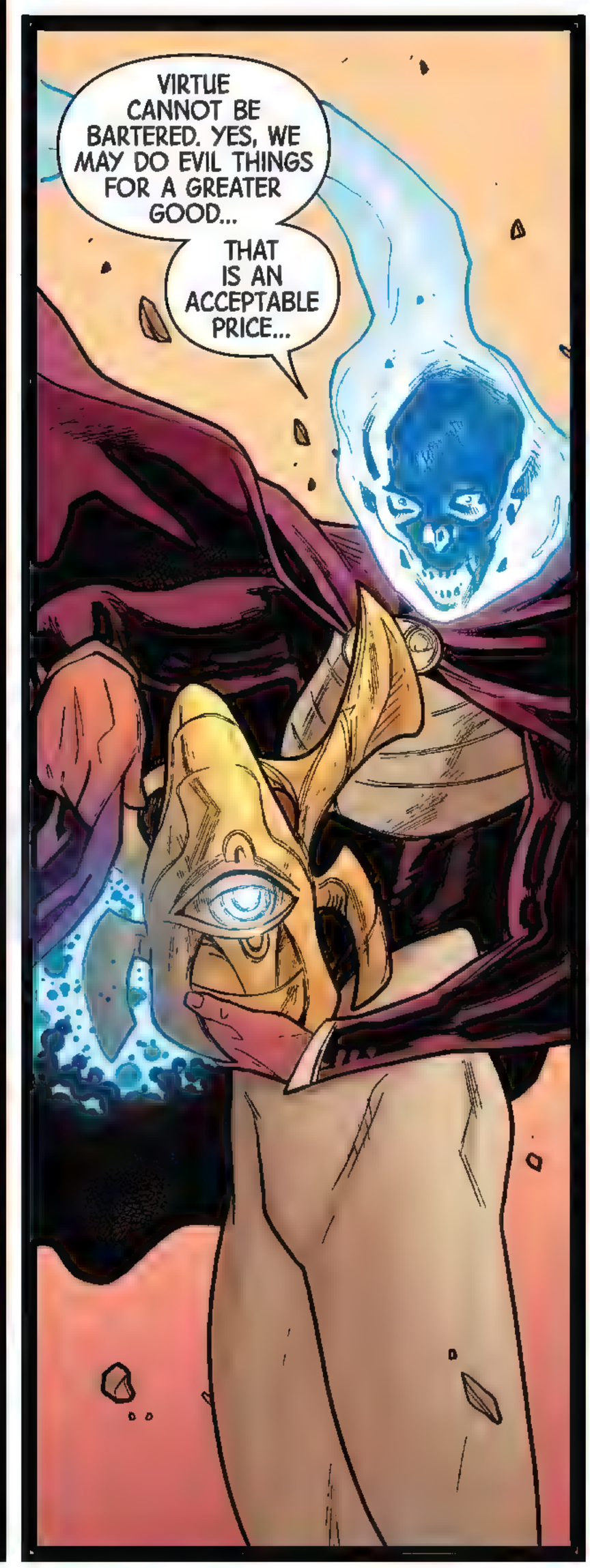
BUT YOU CAN'T PROCESS AND RESPOND TO INFORMATION AT THE SPEED OF LIGHT, CAN YOU?

OF COURSE NOT.

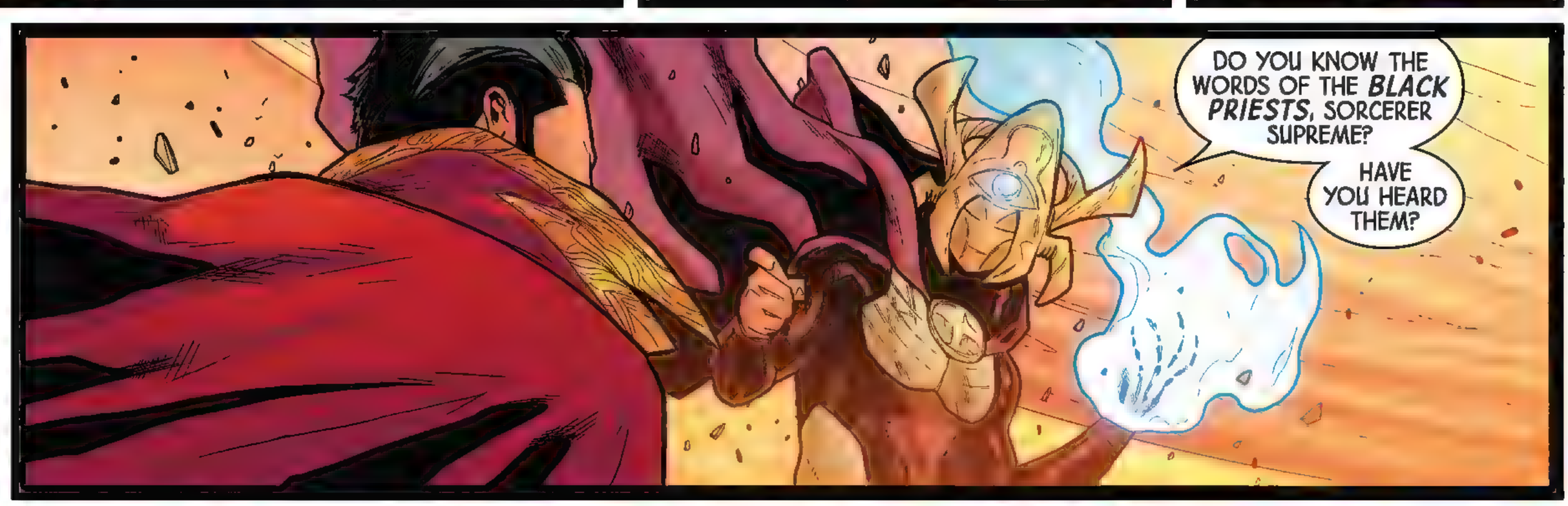
IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW GOOD YOUR HARDWARE IS, YOUR BRAIN JUST DOESN'T WORK THAT FAST, TIN MAN.

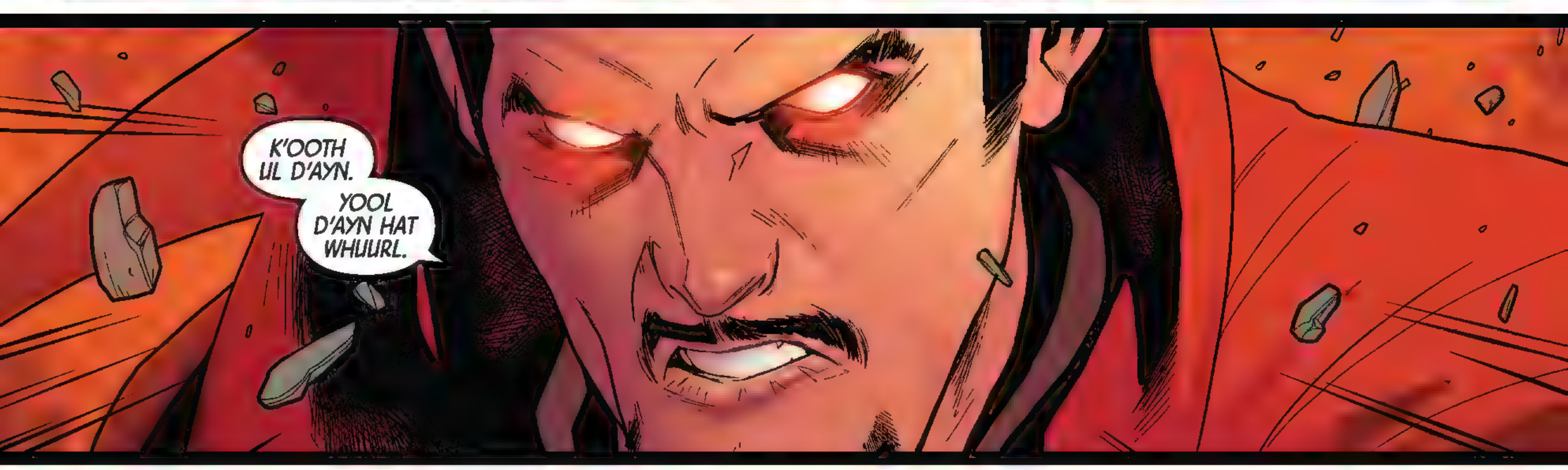
YOU SHOULD REALLY THINK ABOUT AN UPGRADE.

YOU DO NOT NEED AN ALL-SEEING EYE TO UNDERSTAND WHAT HAS HAPPENED HERE TODAY, SORCERER...

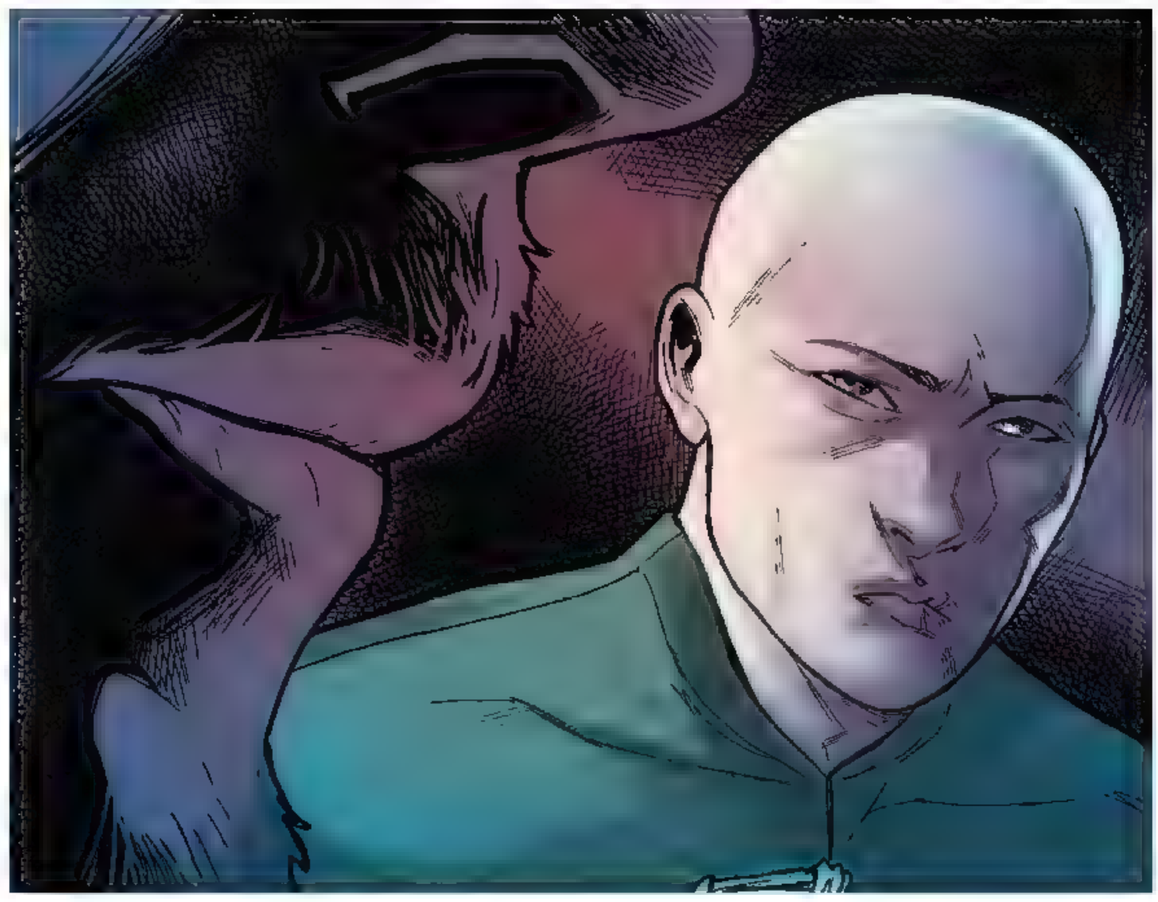

VIRTUE CANNOT BE BARTERED. YES, WE MAY DO EVIL THINGS FOR A GREATER GOOD...
THAT IS AN ACCEPTABLE PRICE...

BUT THE *UNTHINKABLE?*
THE VERY *IDEA* IS UNSPEAKABLE AND MUST NOT BE UTTERED.
SO I SAY NOW TO YOU...*OTHER THINGS.*

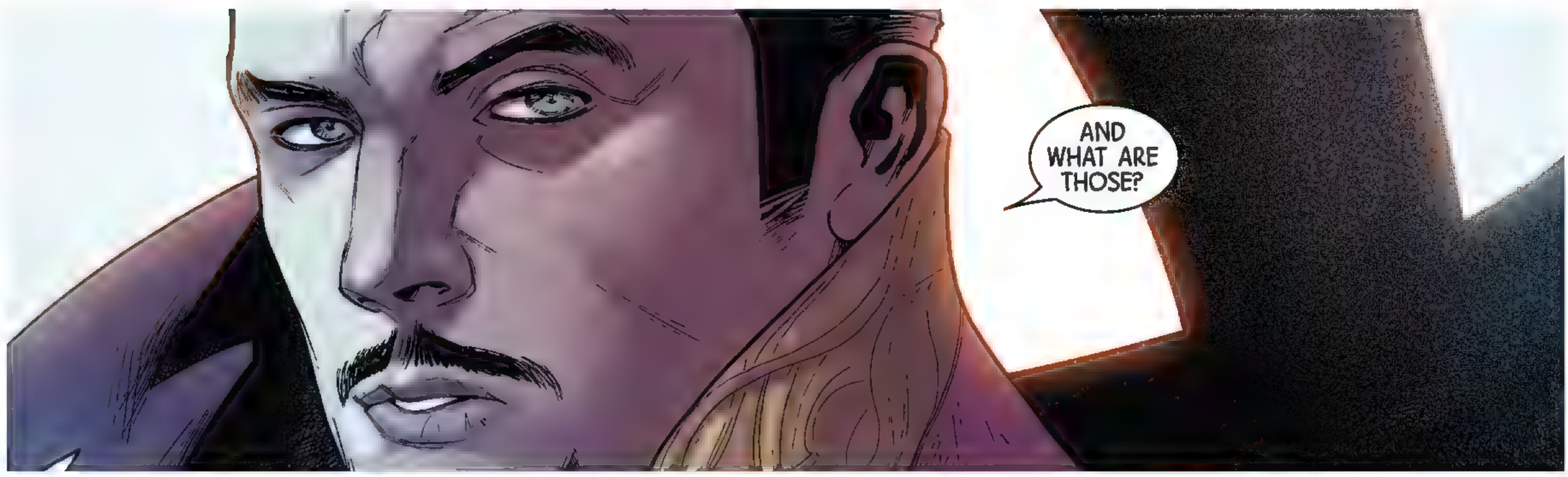

DO YOU KNOW THE WORDS OF THE *BLACK PRIESTS*, SORCERER SUPREME?
HAVE YOU HEARD THEM?


K'OOTH LIL D'AYN.
YOOL D'AYN HAT WHUURL.

THEN.
I AM DAMNED...AND WORSE THAN THAT, SOMEWHERE ALONG THE WAY I HAVE BECOME *LOST*.
TELL ME, WONG...IF I AM LOST, AND LACKING BOTH TIME AND MEANS... THEN WHAT HOPE DO I HAVE FOR REDEMPTION?



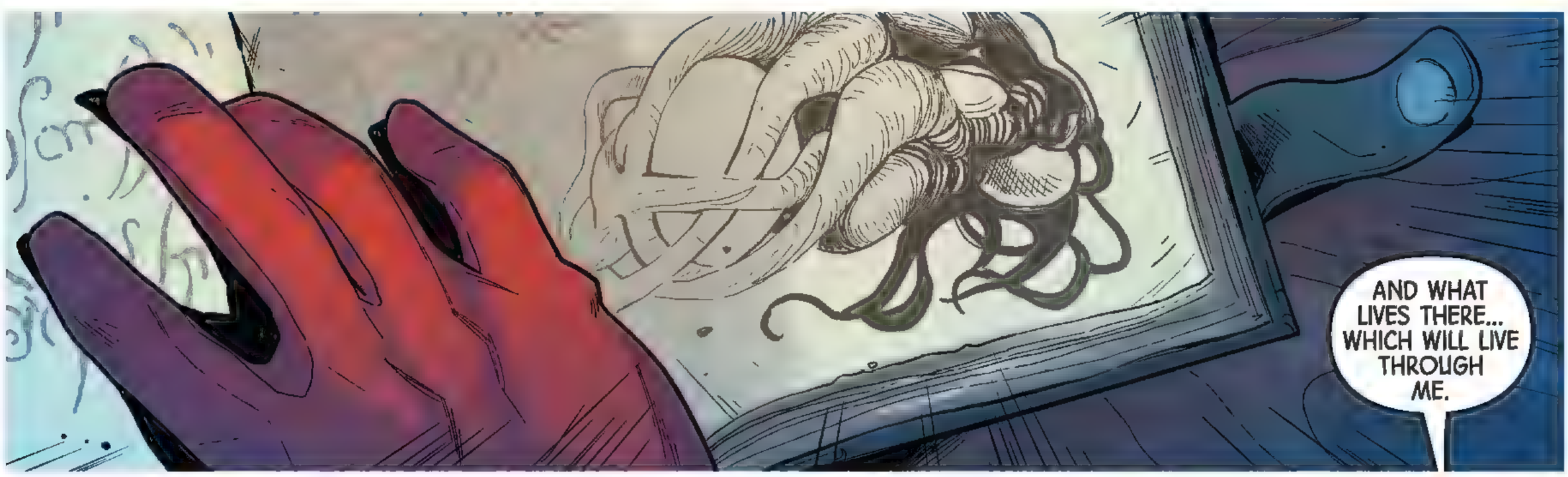
WE DO WORKS FOR MANY REASONS, MASTER.
I THINK, FOR A SEASON, YOU HAVE CHOSEN TO WALK THIS WORLD AND OTHERS WITH YOUR EYES CLOSED...
AND NOW YOU ASK ME--HOW CAN I CONTINUE IF I HAVE BECOME BLIND?
OPEN YOUR EYES, MY FRIEND. SEE THE THINGS THAT I KNOW ARE REAL...AND BELIEVE TO BE TRUE.


AND WHAT ARE THOSE?

YOU, STEPHEN.
SOMEWHERE IN THERE...YOU ARE STILL A GOOD MAN.

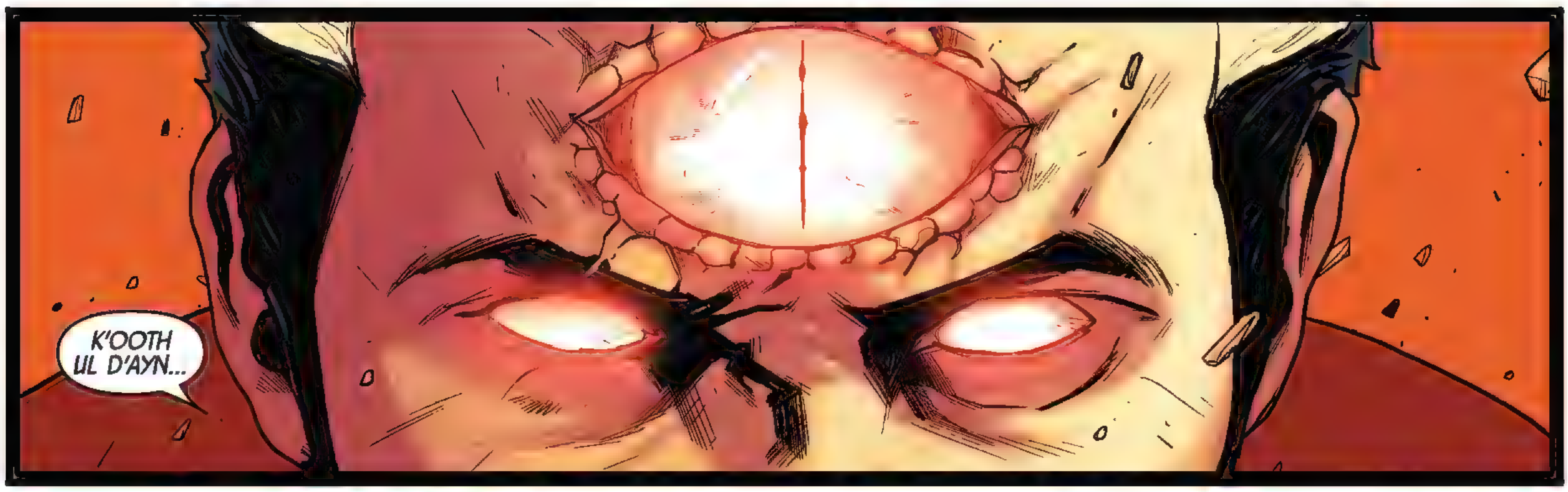
THEN LET THAT SLIVER OF WHAT I WAS BE ENOUGH...

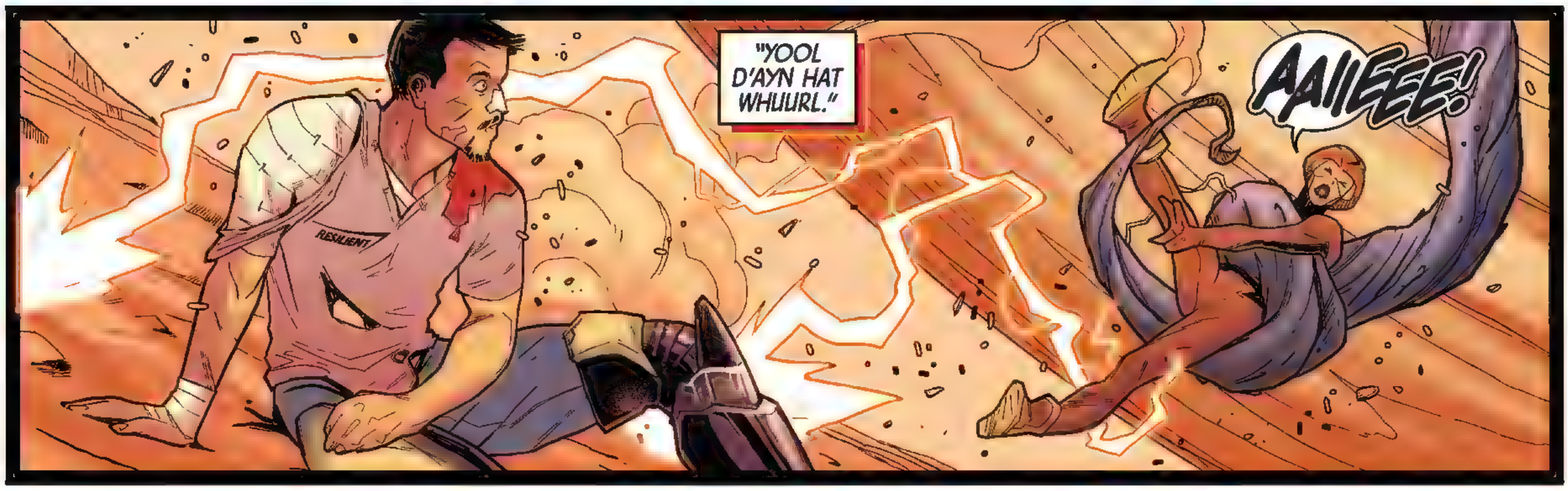
AS ALL I SEE BEFORE ME NOW IS *THE ABYSS.*

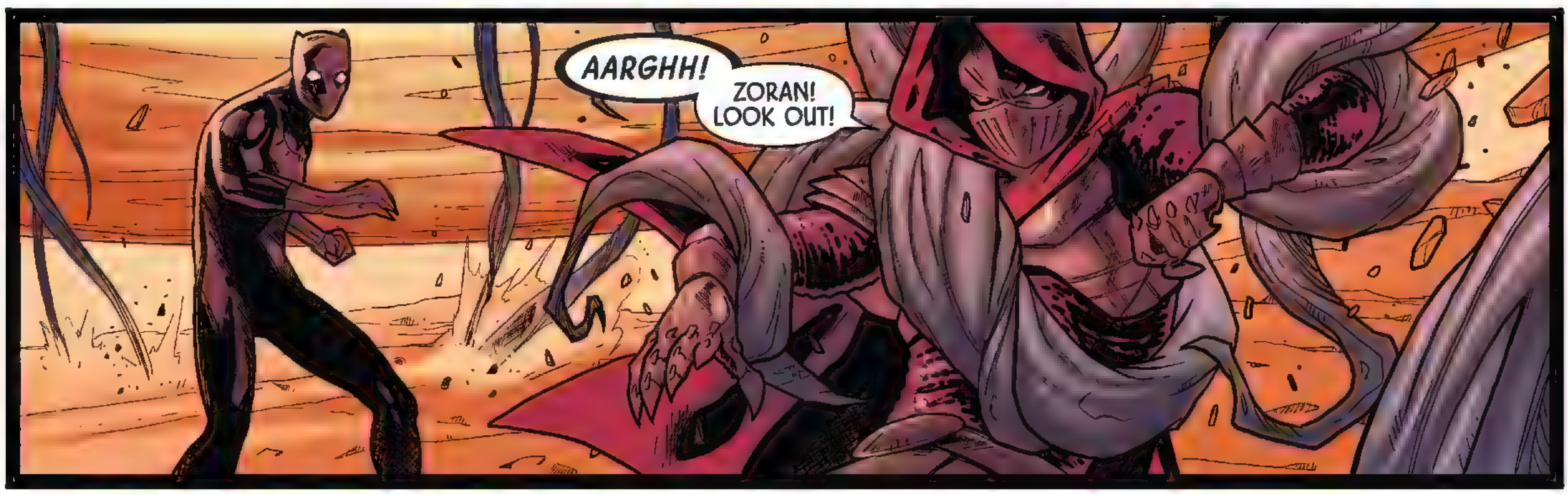

AND WHAT LIVES THERE... WHICH WILL LIVE THROUGH ME.

K'OOTH LIL D'AYN.
YOOL--

--D'AYN HAT WHUURL.
DO YOU KNOW THESE WORDS, CHARLATAN?
OF COURSE YOU DON'T.
YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE *THE GIFT*, DO YOU?
I WOULD WAGER YOU'VE SPENT MOST OF YOUR LIFE ACQUIRING YOUR ITEMS OF POWER. AT BEST, YOU'RE A CURATOR...
NO!
BUT I THINK WE BOTH KNOW YOU'RE JUST A THIEF.
UNF!
WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE *REAL* POWER, CHILD?
WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE WHAT THE *ART* REALLY COSTS?


K'OOTH UL D'AYN...

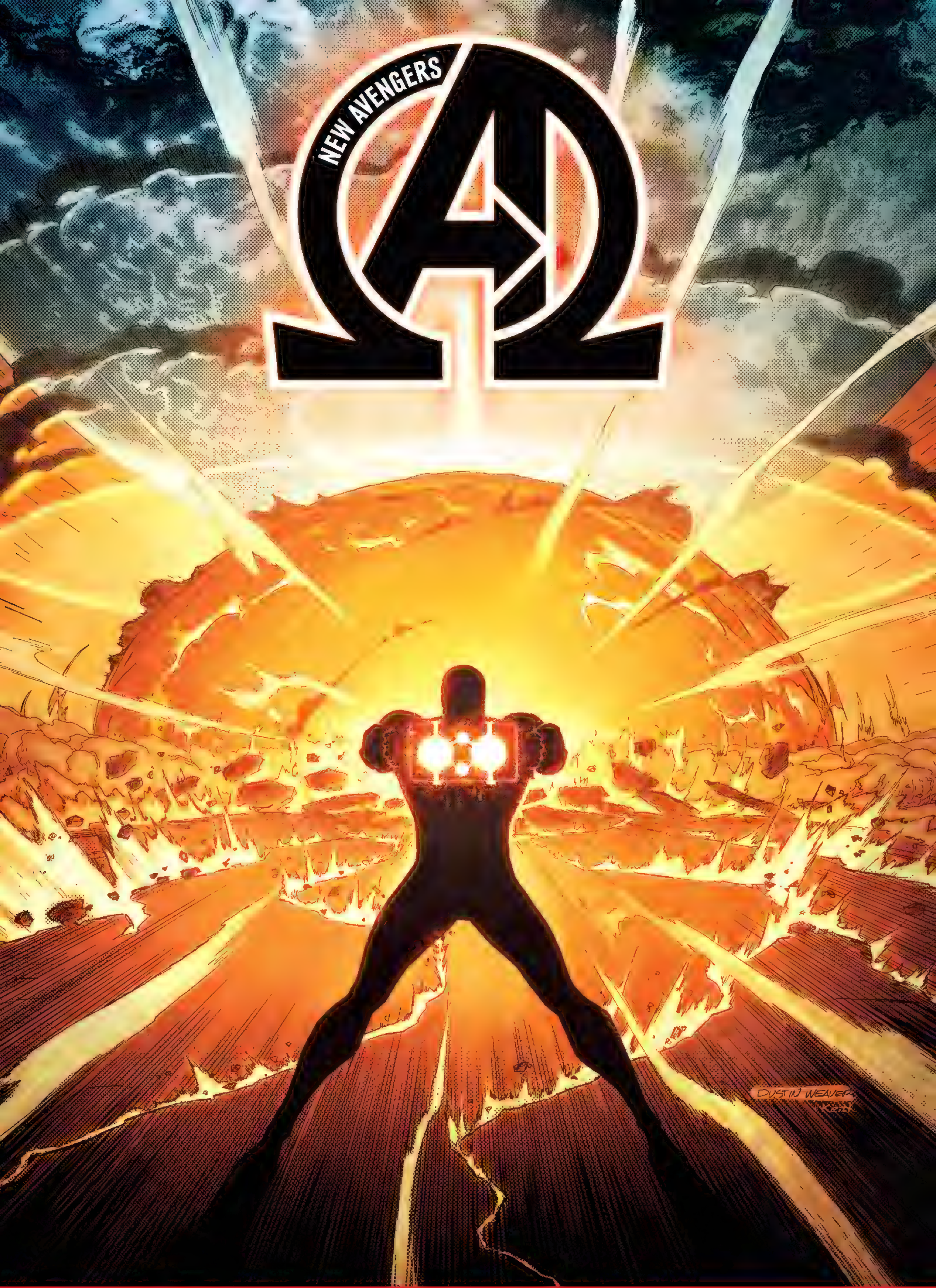

"YOOL D'AYN HAT WHUURL."
AAIIEEE!
RESILIENT


AARGHH!
ZORAN! LOOK OUT!

WHAT IS THIS?

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE, SORCERER?
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

GIVEN ALL I HAD LEFT-- I HAVE SACRIFICED WHAT LITTLE REMAINED...
ALL TO DESTROY YOUR WORLD...
AND SAVE MINE.
NEW AVENGERS

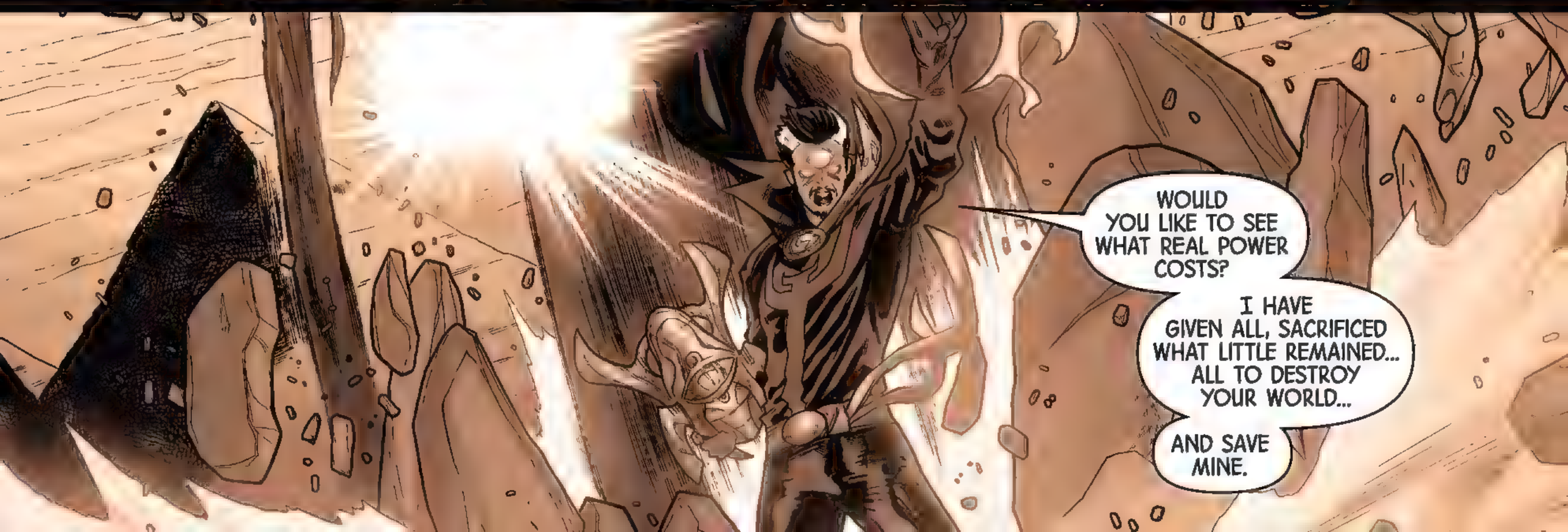


ALL-NEW MARVEL NOW!

HICKMAN SCHITI MARTIN

021

PREVIOUSLY IN NEW AVENGERS



"THE BOMB"

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ARTISTS: VALERIO SCHITI with SALVADOR LARROCA

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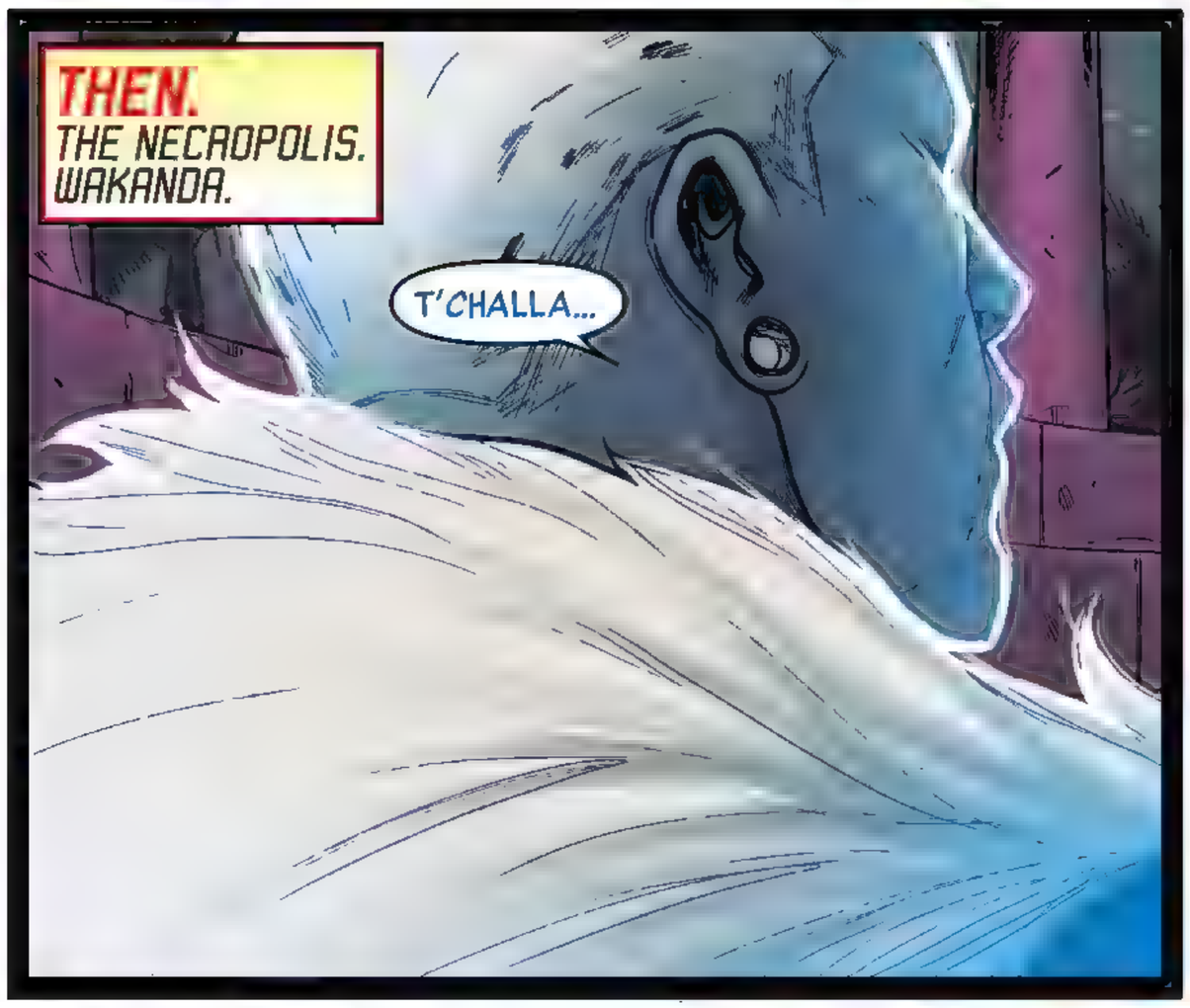
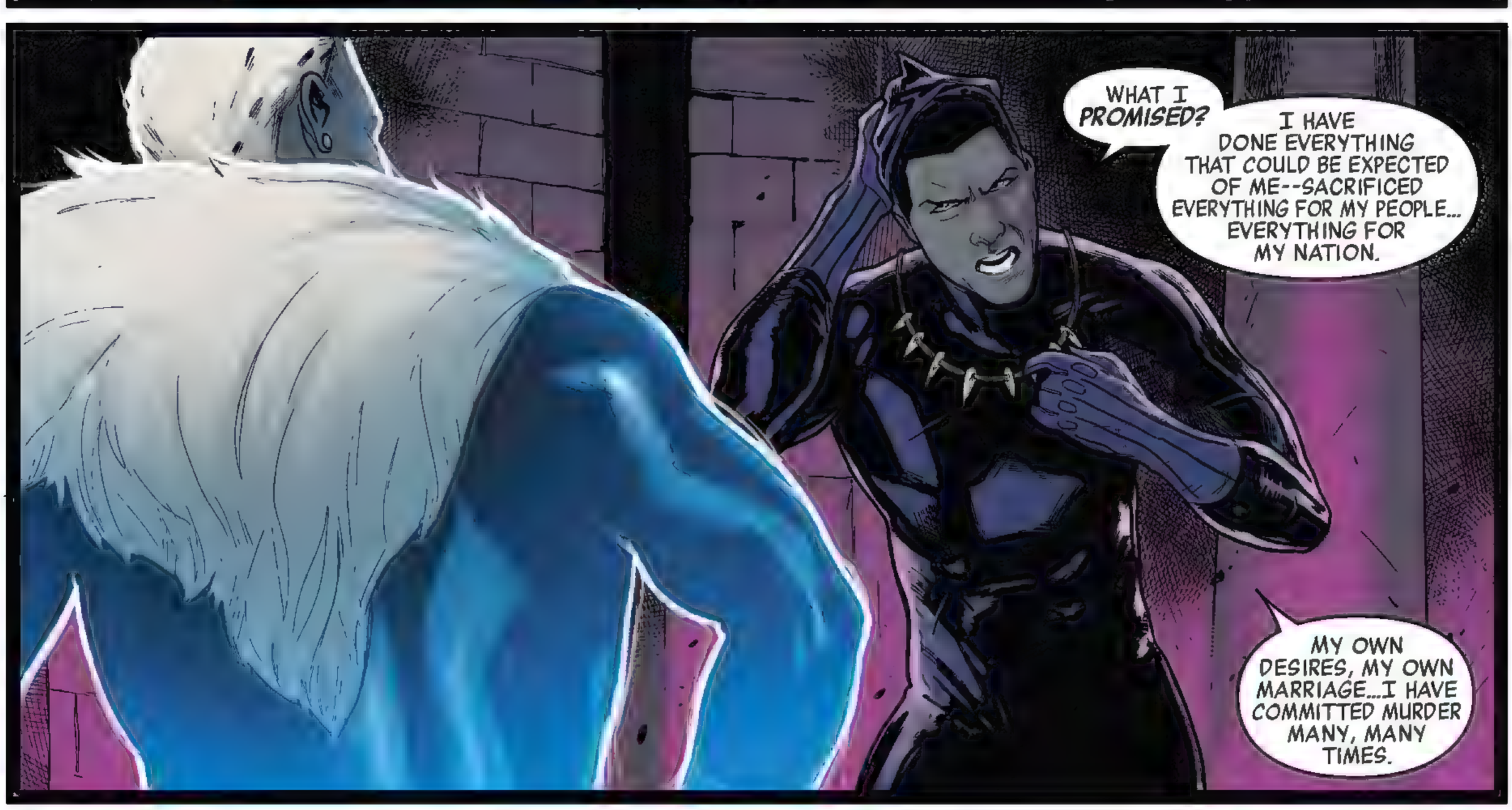

THEN.
THE NECROPOLIS. WAKANDA.
T'CHALLA...

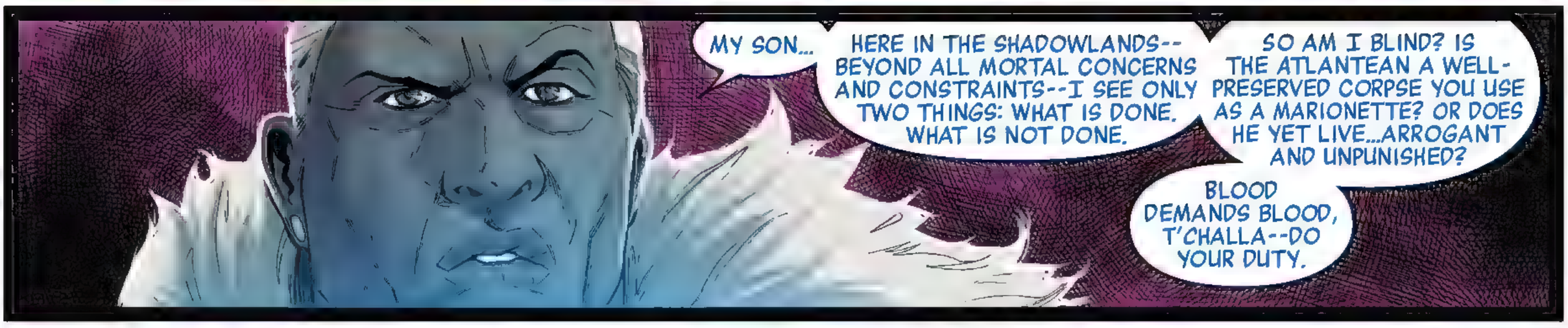
YES, FATHER?

WHY DOES THE ATLANTEAN STILL BREATHE?

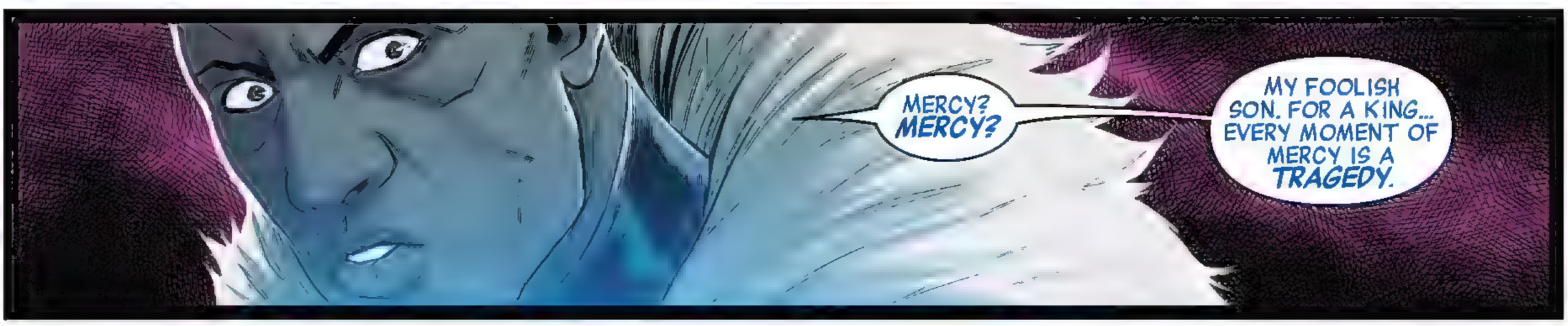
WHY HAVEN'T YOU KILLED HIM YET?
WHY HAVEN'T YOU DONE WHAT YOU PROMISED?

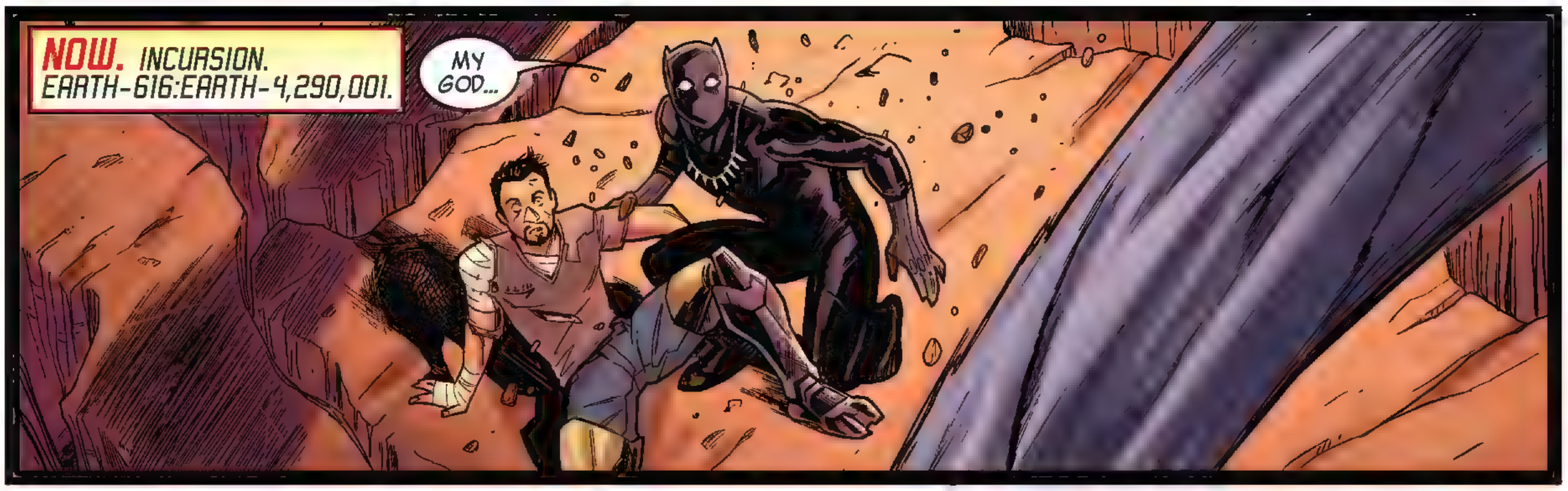

WHAT I PROMISED?
I HAVE DONE EVERYTHING THAT COULD BE EXPECTED OF ME--SACRIFICED EVERYTHING FOR MY PEOPLE... EVERYTHING FOR MY NATION.
MY OWN DESIRES, MY OWN MARRIAGE...I HAVE COMMITTED MURDER MANY, MANY TIMES.

I HAVE DONE ALL OF THIS FOR WAKANDA--WITH HEAD HELD HIGH, AND NO REGARD FOR SELF...
HOW DARE YOU DOUBT ME, FATHER.


MY SON...
HERE IN THE SHADOWLANDS--BEYOND ALL MORTAL CONCERNS AND CONSTRAINTS--I SEE ONLY TWO THINGS: WHAT IS DONE. WHAT IS NOT DONE.
SO AM I BLIND? IS THE ATLANTEAN A WELL-PRESERVED CORPSE YOU USE AS A MARIONETTE? OR DOES HE YET LIVE...ARROGANT AND UNPUNISHED?
BLOOD DEMANDS BLOOD, T'CHALLA--DO YOUR DUTY.

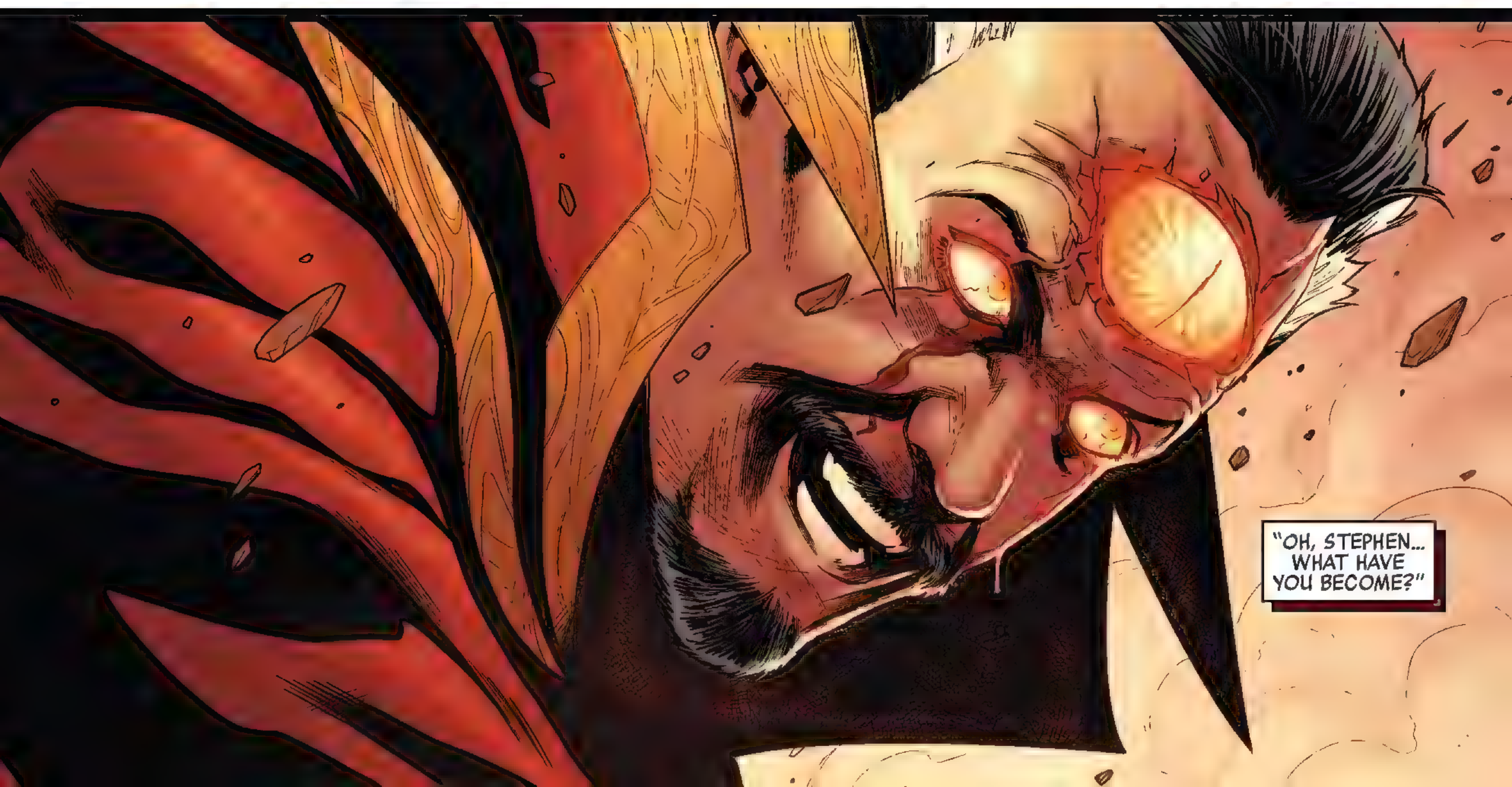
I AM TRYING TO SAVE OUR PEOPLE, FATHER--THAT IS MY DUTY!
AND WHILE I STILL LIVE, I WILL NOT LOOK AT THE WORLD AND SEE ALL PEOPLE AS YOU DO--EVENTUAL ASH AND DUST--BUT AS MEN AND WOMEN WHO STILL BREATHE, AND HAVE PURPOSE.
I BELIEVE NAMOR HAS A PURPOSE.
AND UNTIL THAT PURPOSE HAS BEEN FULFILLED... HE WILL HAVE MY MERCY.


MERCY? MERCY?
MY FOOLISH SON. FOR A KING... EVERY MOMENT OF MERCY IS A TRAGEDY.

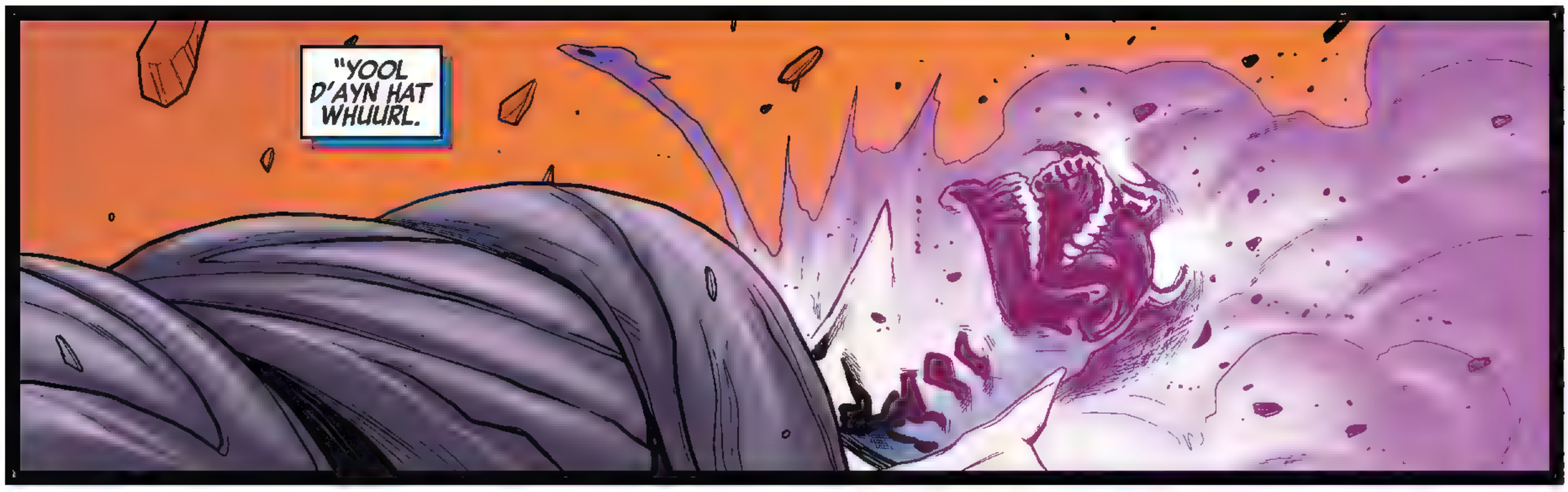

NOW. INCURSION.
EARTH-616:EARTH-4,290,001.
MY GOD...

I THINK NOT. THIS HAS VERY LITTLE TO DO WITH GOD...OR EVEN GODS.
WE'RE IN A MUCH DARKER PLACE, I'M AFRAID.

I DIDN'T KNOW STRANGE WAS CAPABLE OF SOMETHING LIKE THIS...


"OH, STEPHEN... WHAT HAVE YOU BECOME?"

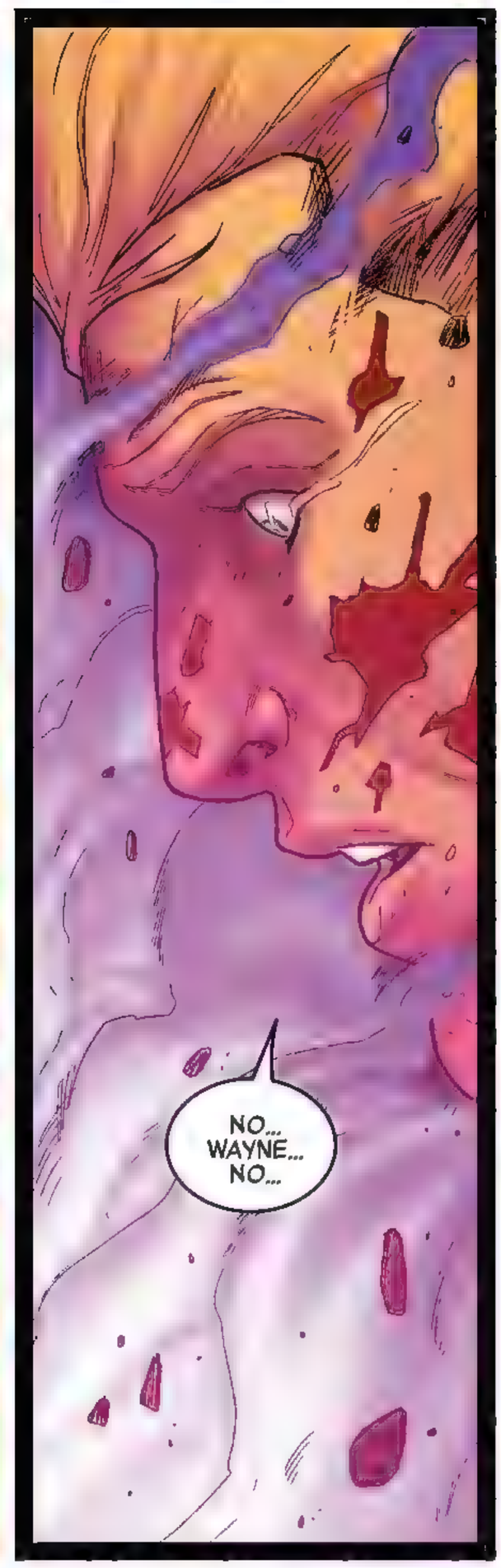
K'OOTH UL D'AYN.
"YOOL D'AYN HAT WHUURL."
AAARRGGHHHH!

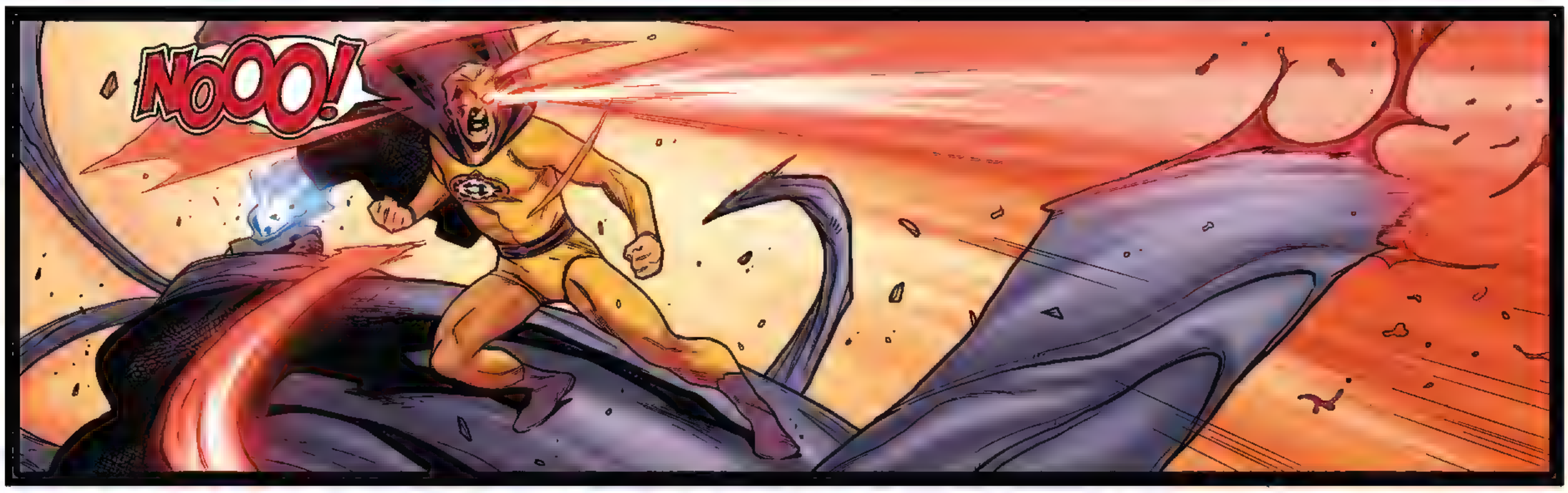

"YOOL D'AYN HAT WHUURL.

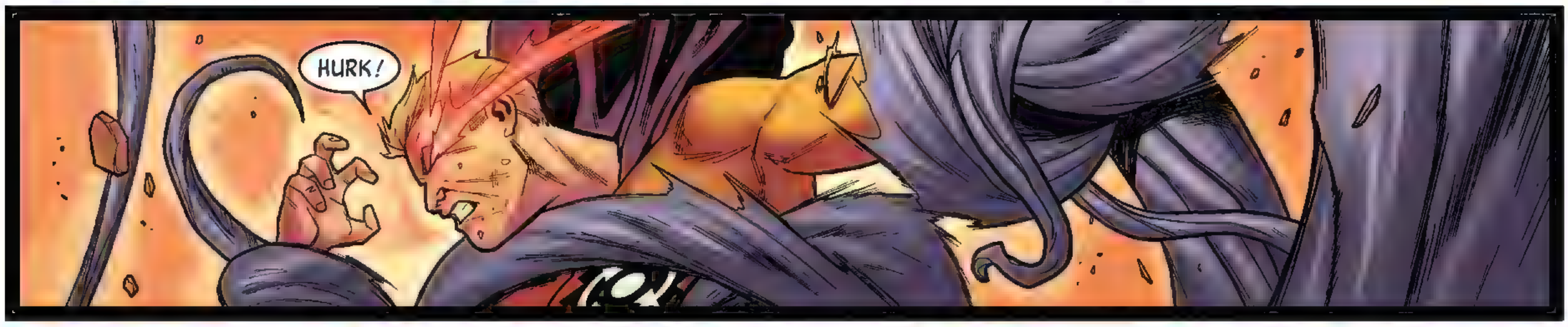
"YOOL D'AYN HAT WHUURL!"

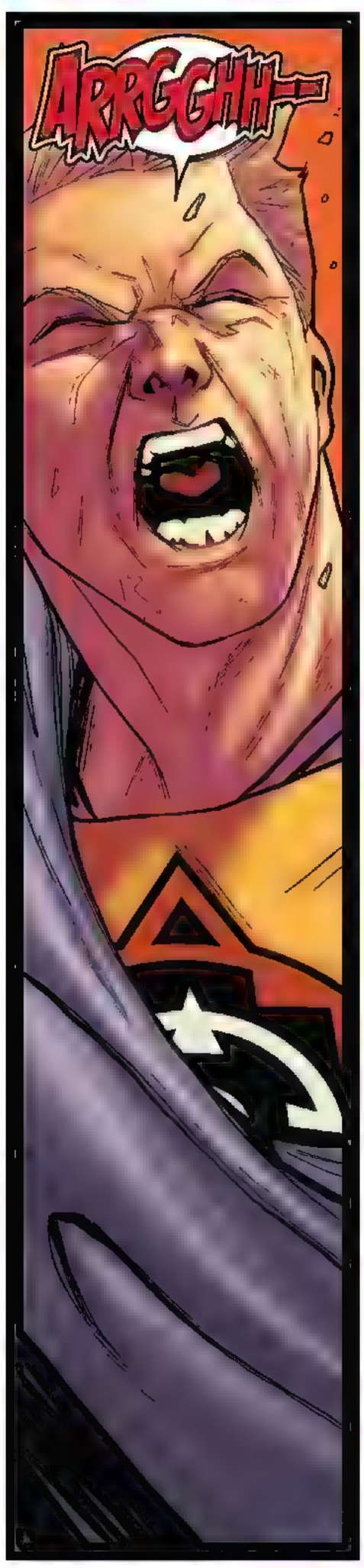
WAYNE!
ACK!
YOU...YOU WERE RIGHT, ZORAN. I WAS WRONG.
IF IT ALL ENDS THIS BADLY, I SHOULD HAVE LIVED A BETT--

AARGGHH!


NO... WAYNE... NO...

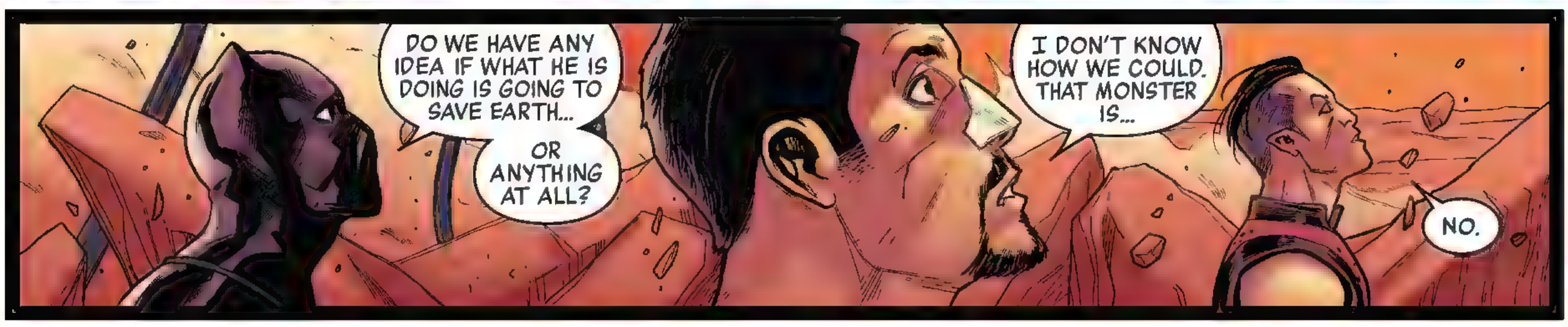

NOOO!


HURK!

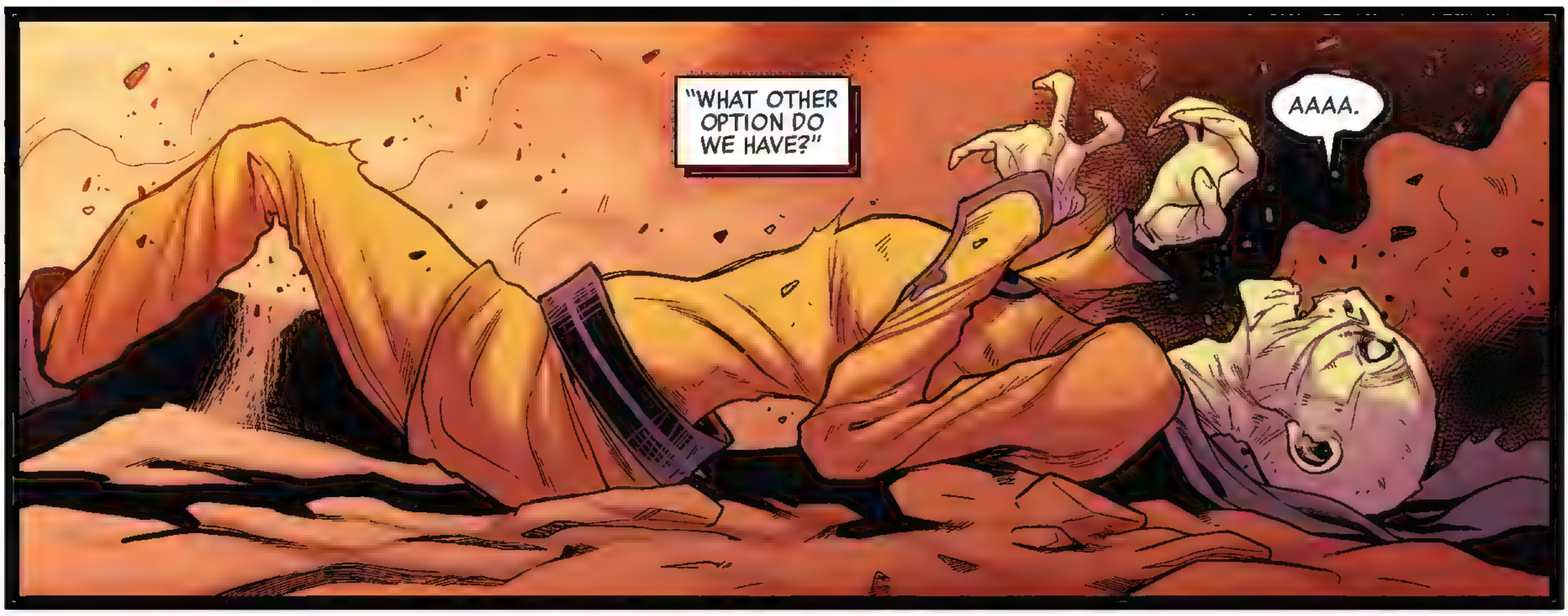

ARRGHH—

HHHHHHHH

HHHHH


DO WE HAVE ANY IDEA IF WHAT HE IS DOING IS GOING TO SAVE EARTH...
OR ANYTHING AT ALL?
I DON'T KNOW HOW WE COULD. THAT MONSTER IS...
NO.

IT'S NOT THE MONSTER THAT SHOULD CONCERN YOU...
IT'S STEPHEN.
"WE HAVE TO STOP HIM."
HE'S COMPLETELY LOST CONTROL.
STARK, CAN YOU GET THAT REPULSOR ONLINE? BECAUSE IF I CAN REVERSE THE--
YEAH. A SHORT-FREQUENCY PULSE SHOULD DO IT.
MAYBE.

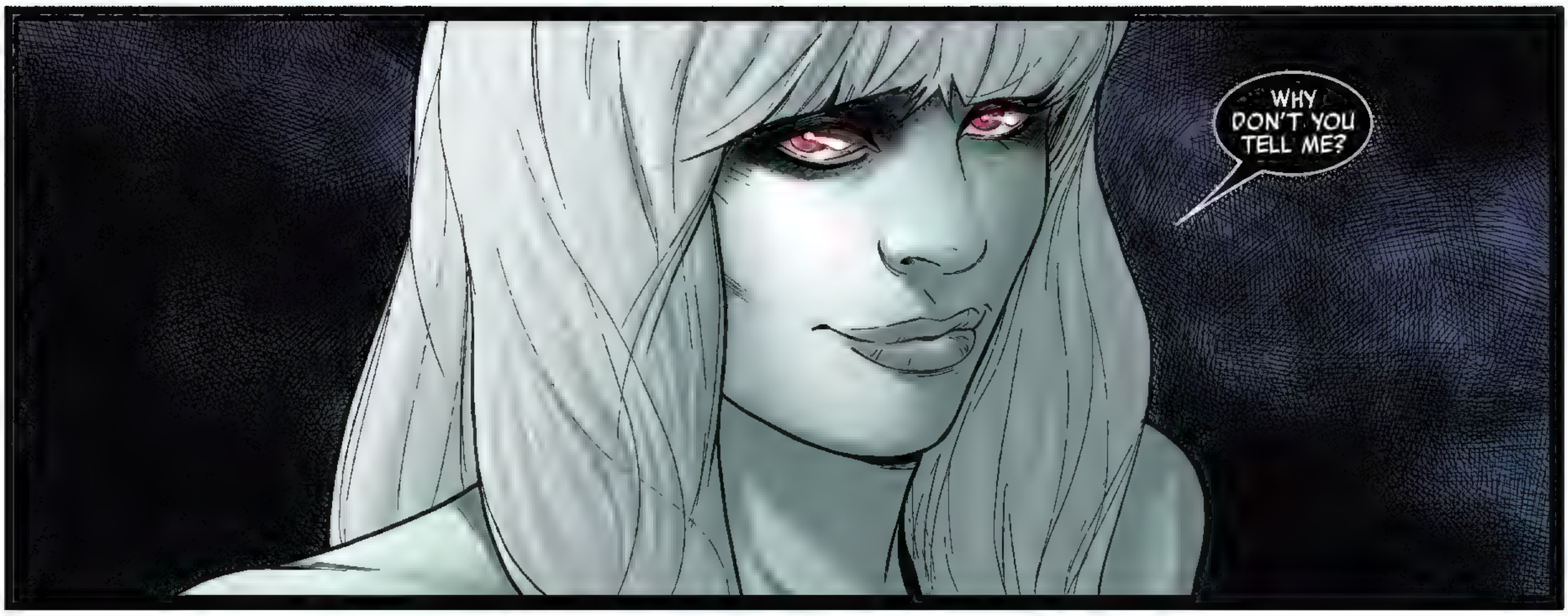

"WHAT OTHER OPTION DO WE HAVE?"
AAAA.

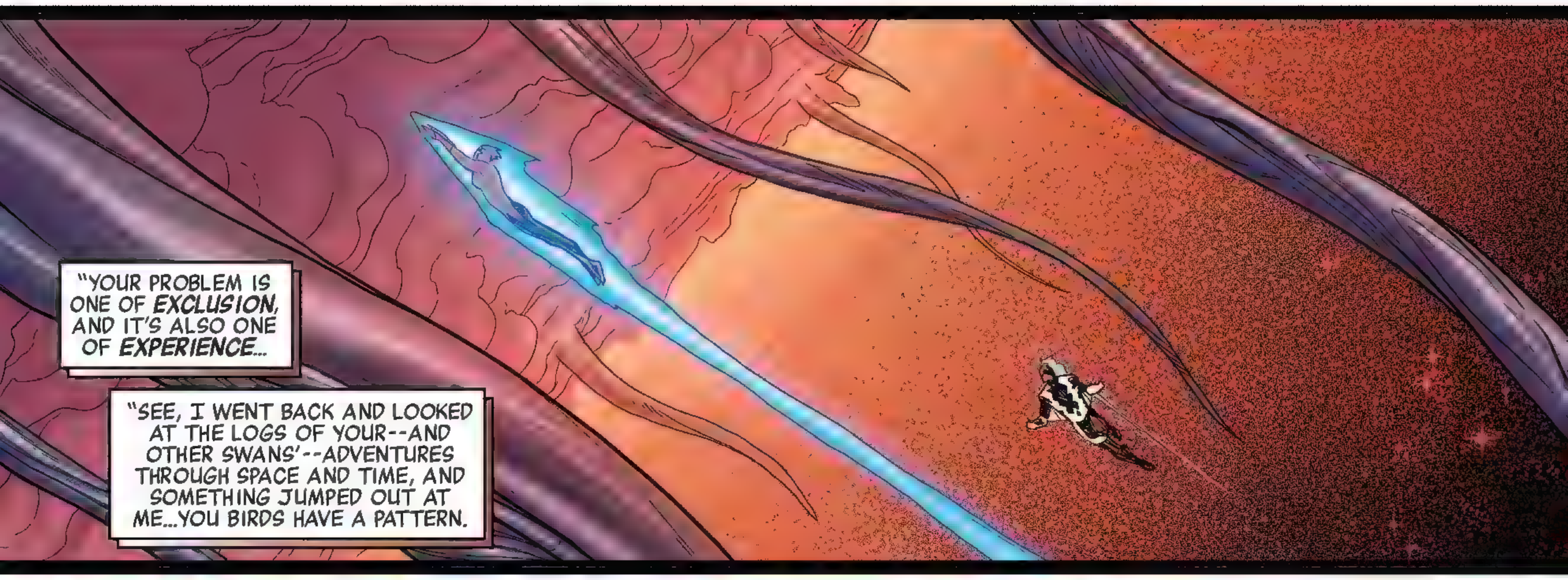
NONE. OKAY...YOU'RE GOOD TO GO. POWER STEADY?
YEAH.
THEN...
FIRE!

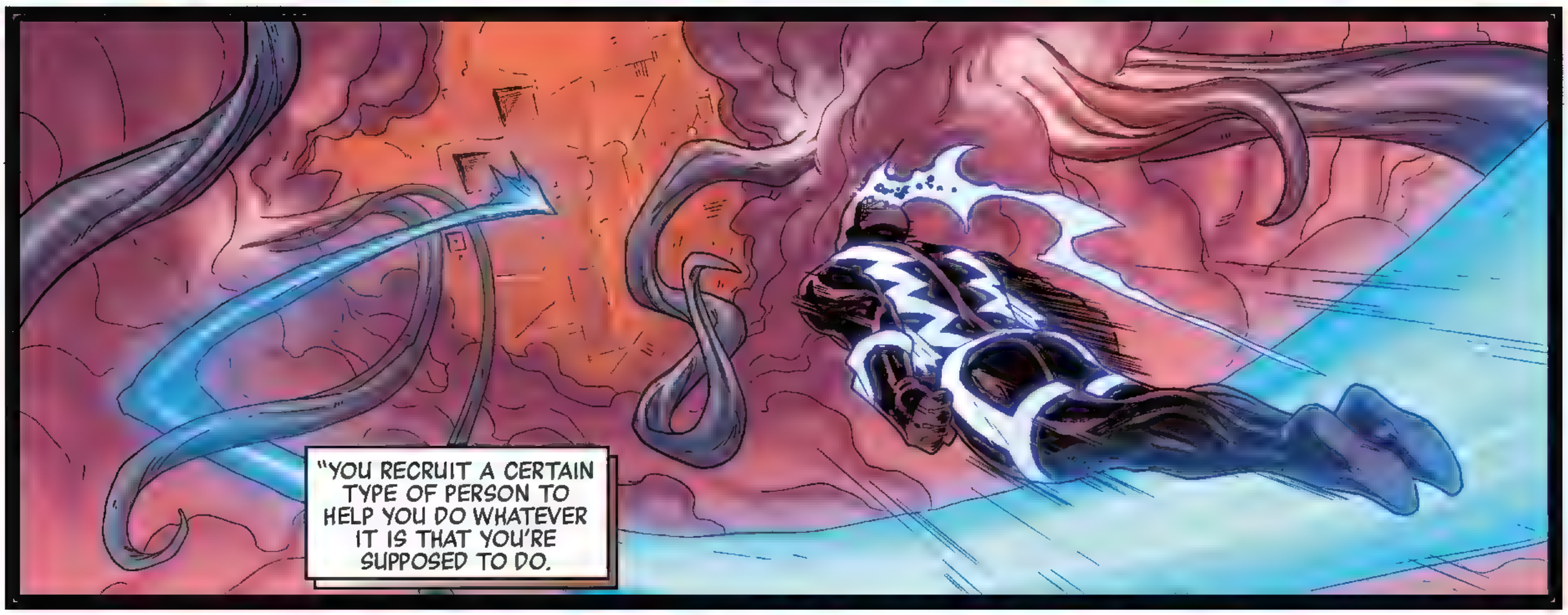
WAKANDA.
THE NECROPOLIS.

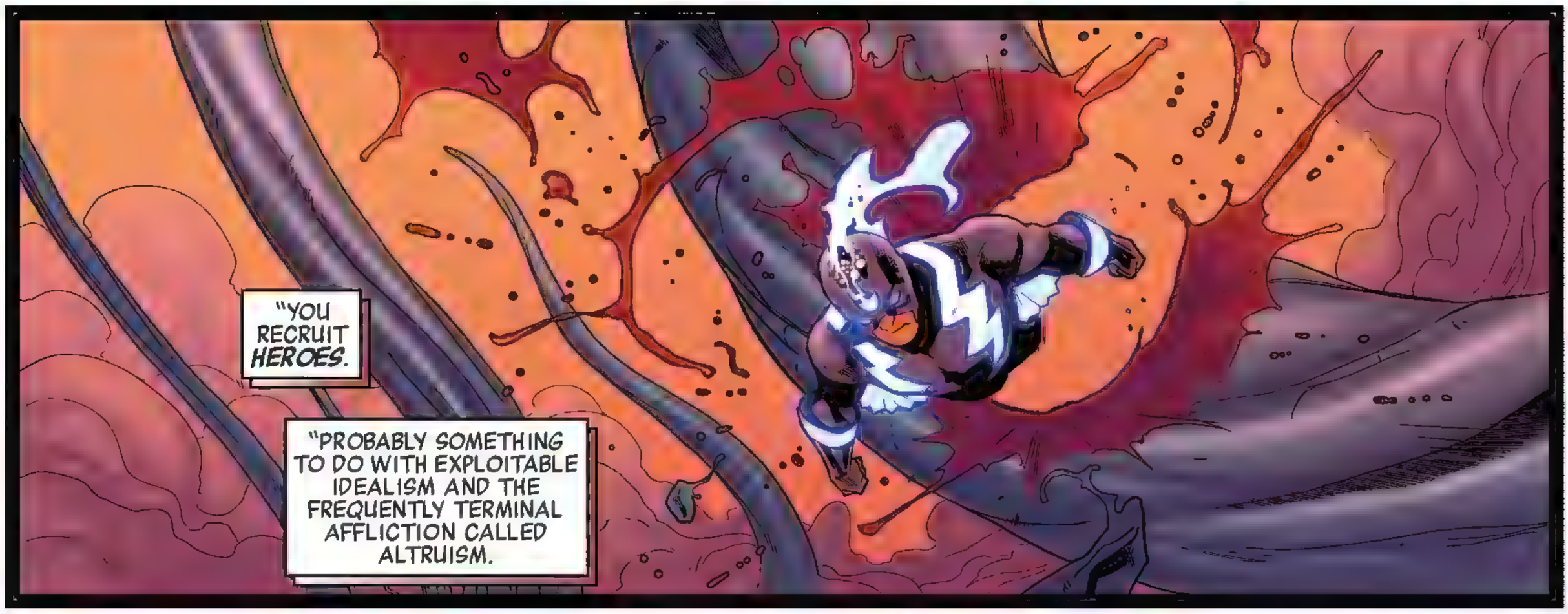
"I THINK I'VE FIGURED IT OUT...

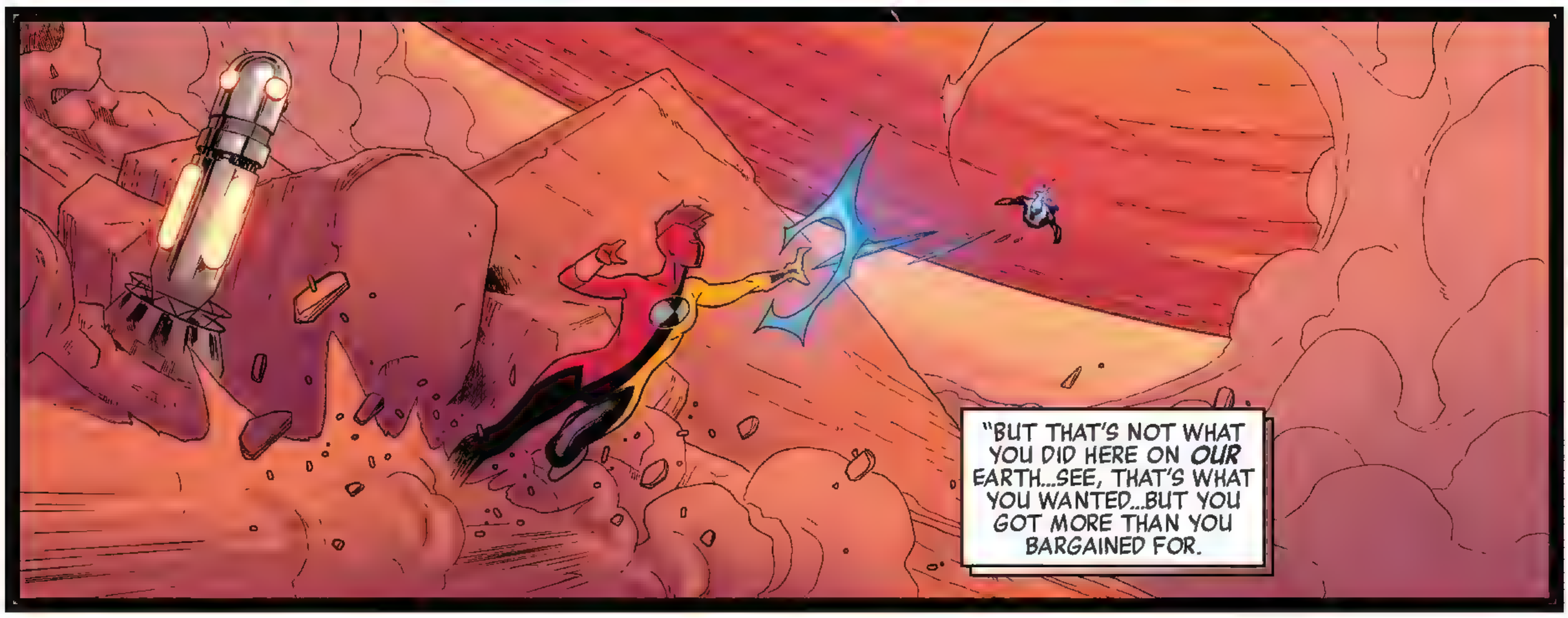
"DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR PROBLEM IS?"




"YOUR PROBLEM IS ONE OF *EXCLUSION*, AND IT'S ALSO ONE OF *EXPERIENCE*...
"SEE, I WENT BACK AND LOOKED AT THE LOGS OF YOUR--AND OTHER SWANS'--ADVENTURES THROUGH SPACE AND TIME, AND SOMETHING JUMPED OUT AT ME...YOU BIRDS HAVE A PATTERN.

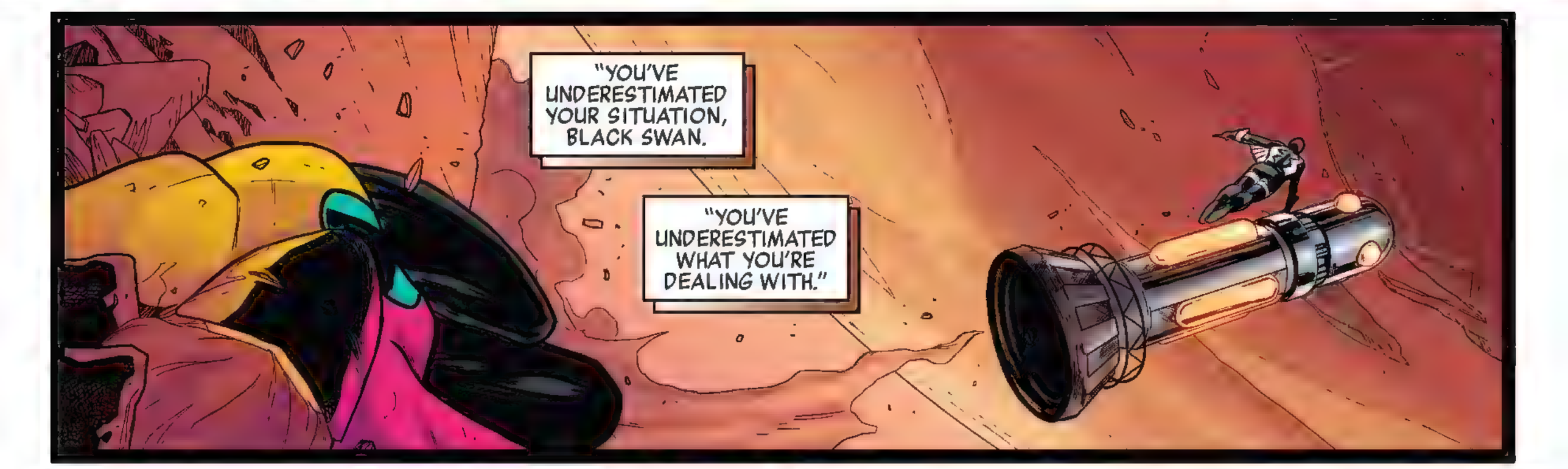

"YOU RECRUIT A CERTAIN TYPE OF PERSON TO HELP YOU DO WHATEVER IT IS THAT YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO DO.


"YOU RECRUIT *HEROES*.
"PROBABLY SOMETHING TO DO WITH EXPLOITABLE IDEALISM AND THE FREQUENTLY TERMINAL AFFLICTION CALLED ALTRUISM.


"BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT YOU DID HERE ON *OUR* EARTH...SEE, THAT'S WHAT YOU WANTED...BUT YOU GOT MORE THAN YOU BARGAINED FOR.

"YOU'RE USED TO DEALING WITH HEROES...BUT WHAT YOU DON'T HAVE MUCH EXPERIENCE WITH IS *KINGS*.
"AND THAT'S YOUR PROBLEM HERE.
"YOU CAN'T THINK OF THEM AS NORMAL MEN. YOU CAN'T EVEN THINK OF THEM AS BEHAVING HUMAN--THAT'S THINKING TOO SMALL...
"THEY ARE LARGER THAN THAT, *BIGGER* THAN THAT...THEY EXIST ABOVE OTHER MEN BECAUSE THEY WERE BORN THAT WAY.
"AUTHORITY BEGAN AT THE CRADLE, YOU SEE.
"THEIR VERY IDEA OF MORALITY IS DIFFERENT THAN WHAT YOU ARE USED TO.
"THE PEOPLE--THEIR PEOPLE--EXPECT THEM TO DO VIOLENCE TO ENSURE A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF PEACE AND PROSPERITY.

"AND LIKE GODS, THEY ARE ALSO EXPECTED TO COMMIT MURDER...SO THE PEOPLE CAN SLEEP AT NIGHT KNOWING THEY ARE PROTECTED.

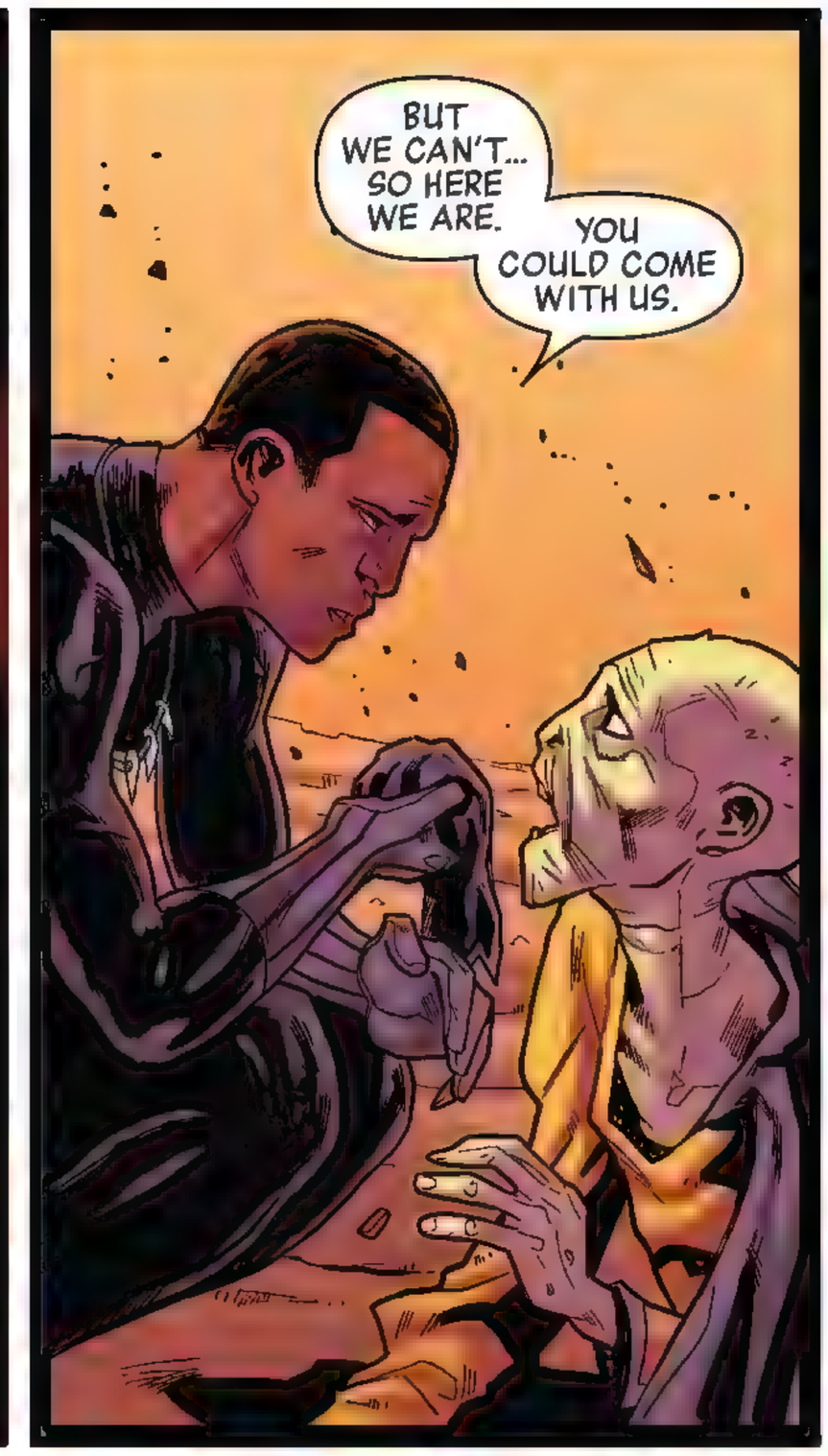


"WAS IT DAMAGED BY WHATEVER THAT WAS THAT STRANGE CONJURED?"

NO. EVERYTHING LOOKS INTACT, INCLUDING THE SHIELDING MECHANISM.

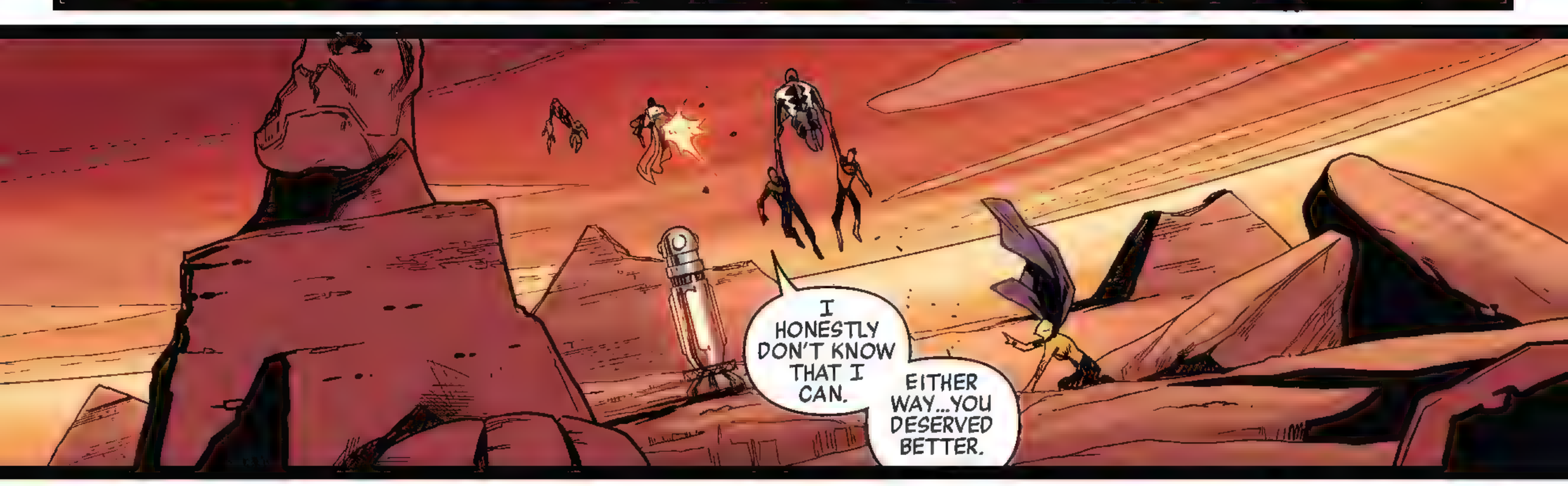
DIAGNOSTICS ARE GREEN ACROSS THE BOARD...

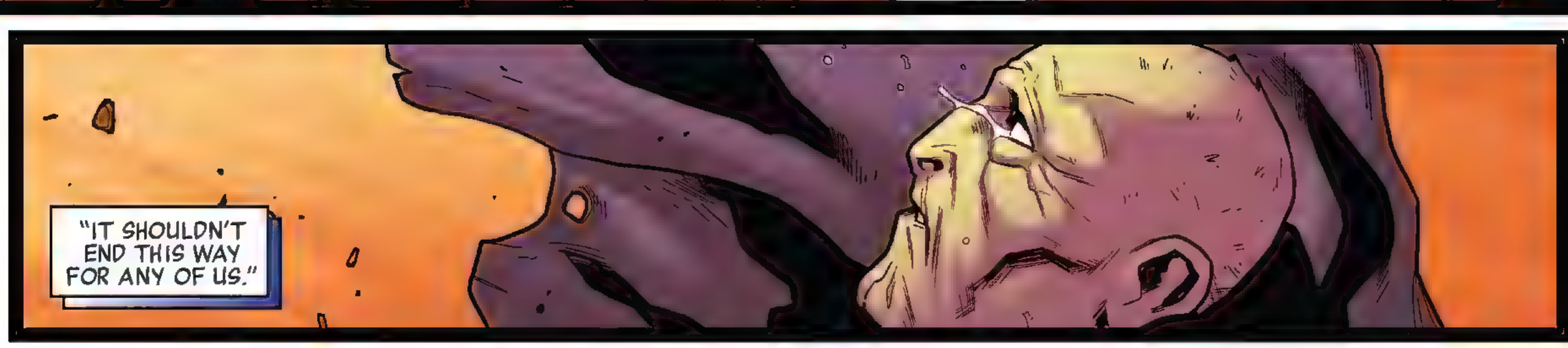
I WISH THAT WERE TRUE, BUT IT ISN'T, IS IT? IT DOES HAVE TO BE ONE WAY OR THE OTHER.
I'D GIVE ANYTHING TO BE IGNORANT OF ALL THIS. I WISH I COULD GO BACK...


BUT WE CAN'T... SO HERE WE ARE.
YOU COULD COME WITH US.

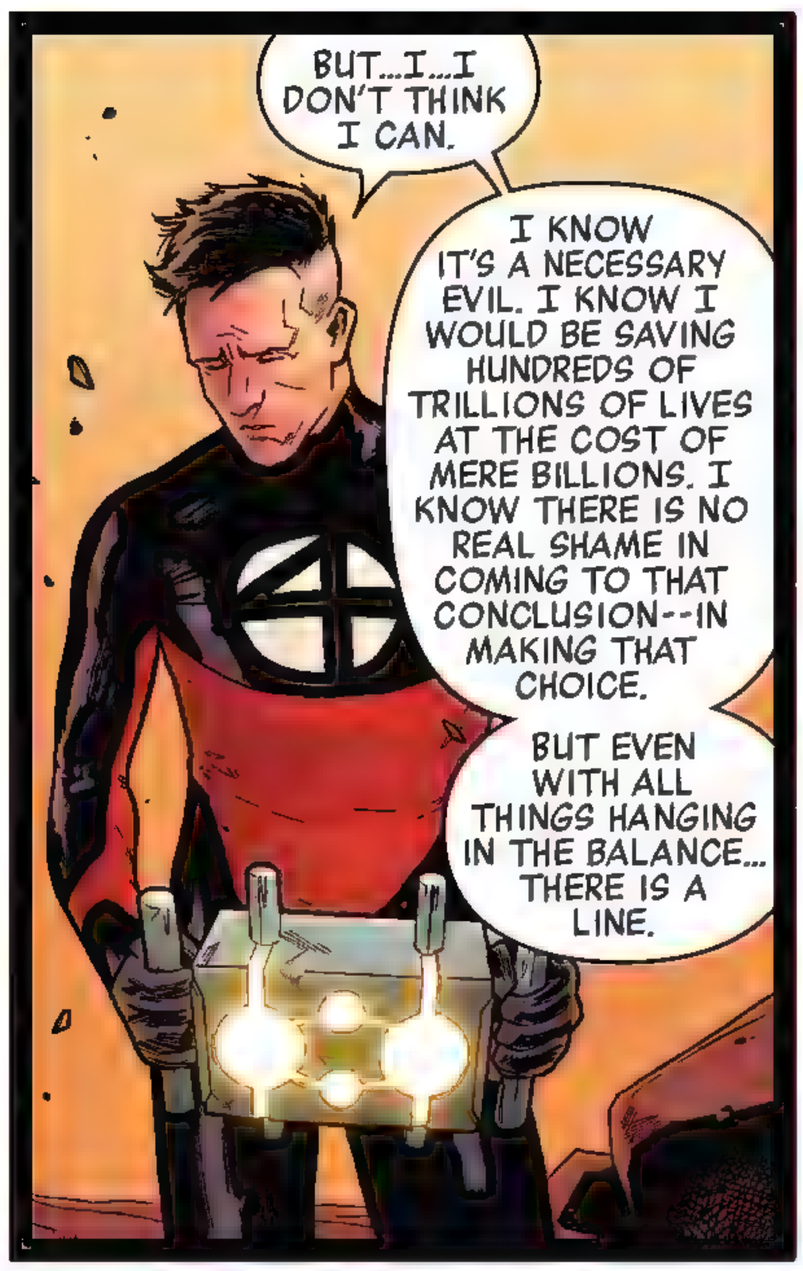
I...I WOULD RATHER DIE. WITH...WITH MY FRIENDS...
WITH... WITH MY WORLD.

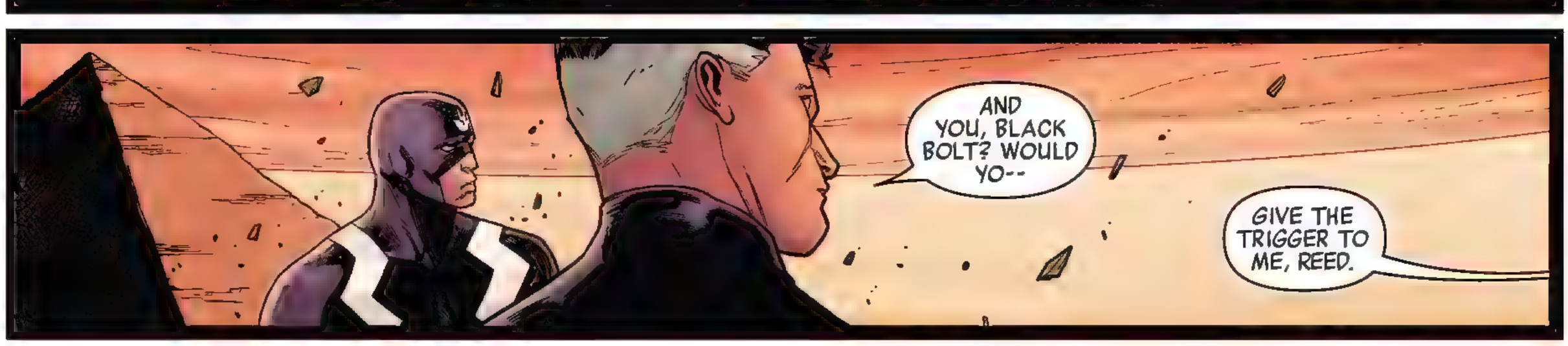
AND IN THAT, I SUSPECT WE ARE THE SAME.
I'M SORRY. I REALLY AM.
DON'T... DON'T DO IT.


I HONESTLY DON'T KNOW THAT I CAN.
EITHER WAY...YOU DESERVED BETTER.


"IT SHOULDN'T END THIS WAY FOR ANY OF US."

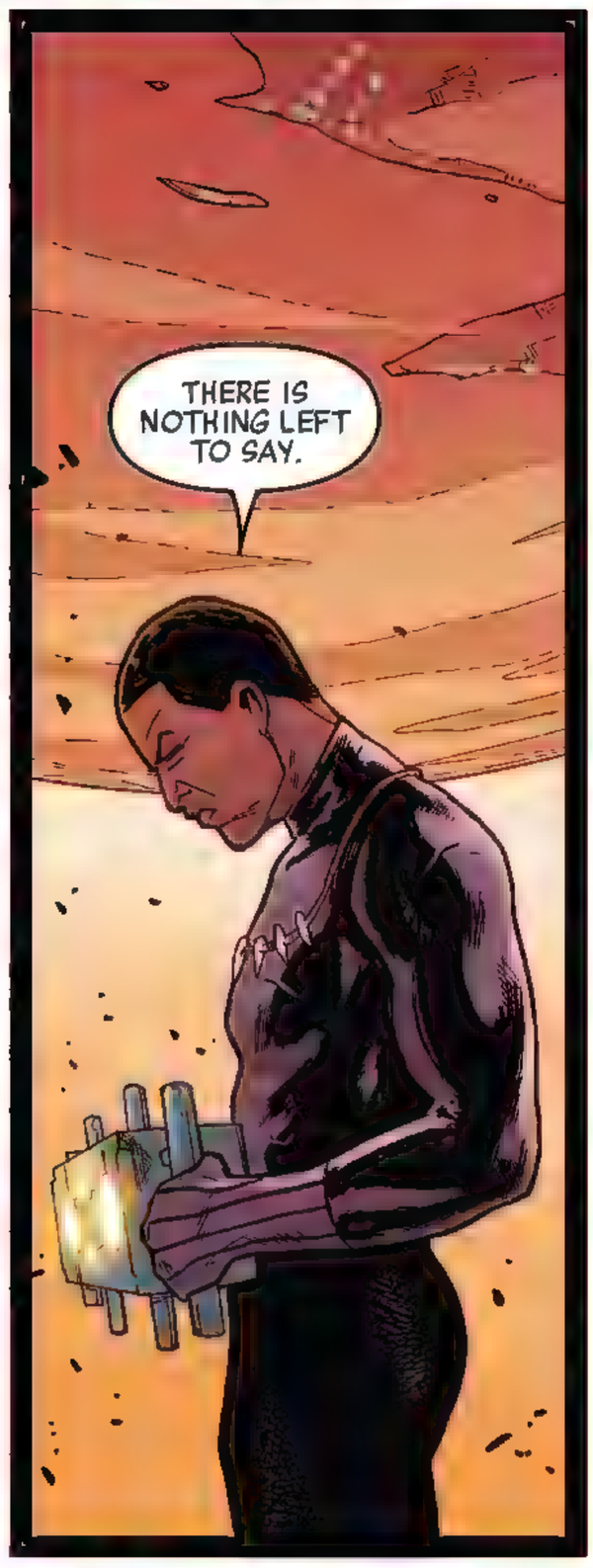
EARTH-616.
TEN MINUTES TO COLLISION.
TRIGGER ACTIVE.
ARE WE REALLY GOING TO DO THIS?
WE'RE OUT OF TIME, BRUCE... WE'RE OUT OF OPTIONS...WE HAVE TO.





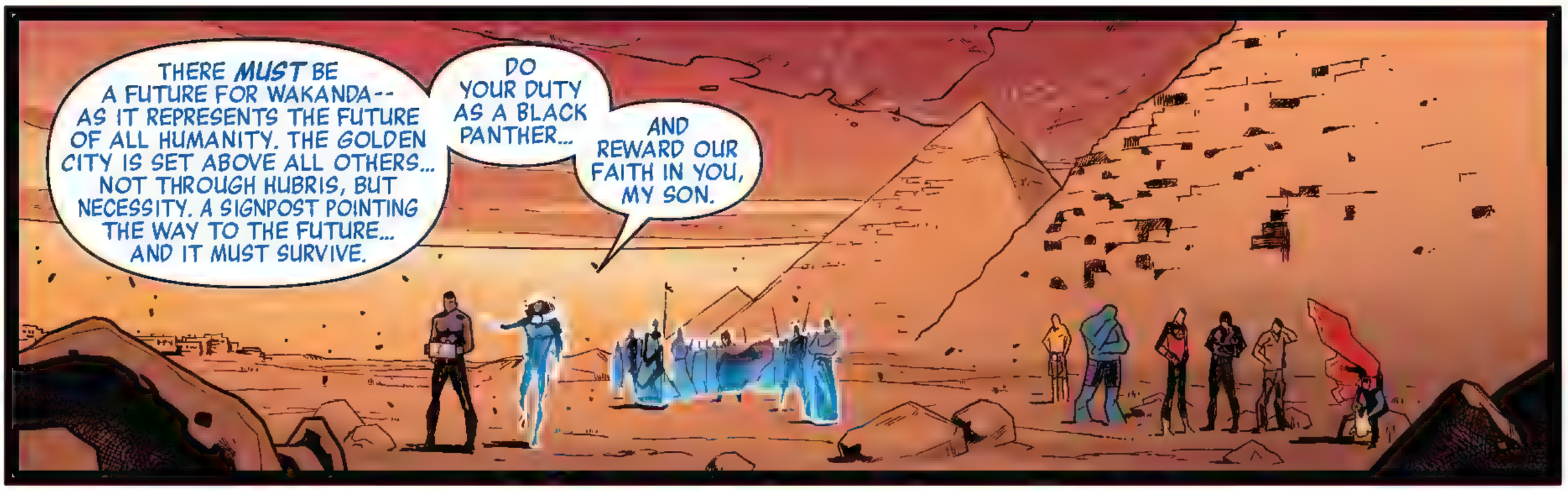
I WILL DO IT.

T'CHALLA, I...I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO--
WE'RE OUT OF TIME. AND THIS IS ALL THAT'S LEFT...


THERE IS NOTHING LEFT TO SAY.

THEN WHY HESITATE...IS THIS YET MORE OF YOUR MERCY, T'CHALLA?
WHEN I WAS YOUNGER, YOU TOLD ME TO ALWAYS CONSIDER MY ACTIONS, FATHER.
THIS... DEMANDS CONSIDERATION.

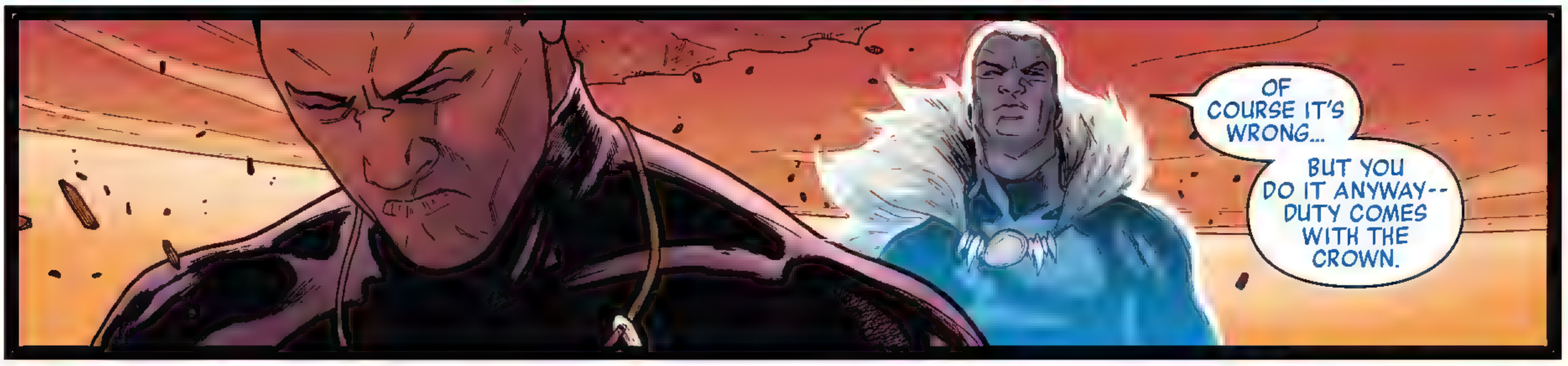
DOES IT?
THIS ACTION IS NOT ABOUT YOU, OR ME, OR EVEN OUR PEOPLE--WHO ALL BLACK PANTHERS HAVE SWORN TO PROTECT...
IT IS THE ENTIRE LINE. ALL THAT WE WILL BE!

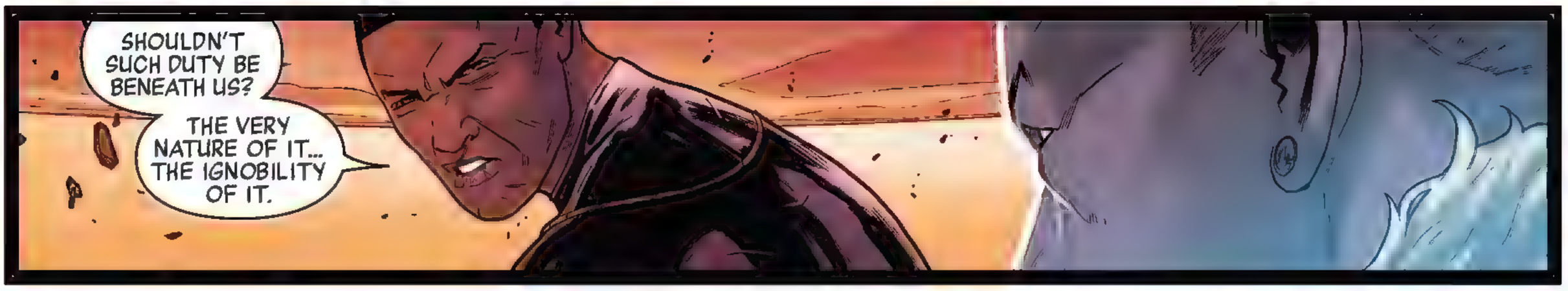

THERE MUST BE A FUTURE FOR WAKANDA-- AS IT REPRESENTS THE FUTURE OF ALL HUMANITY. THE GOLDEN CITY IS SET ABOVE ALL OTHERS... NOT THROUGH HUBRIS, BUT NECESSITY. A SIGNPOST POINTING THE WAY TO THE FUTURE... AND IT MUST SURVIVE.
DO YOUR DUTY AS A BLACK PANTHER...
AND REWARD OUR FAITH IN YOU, MY SON.

YES...OF COURSE.
YES.

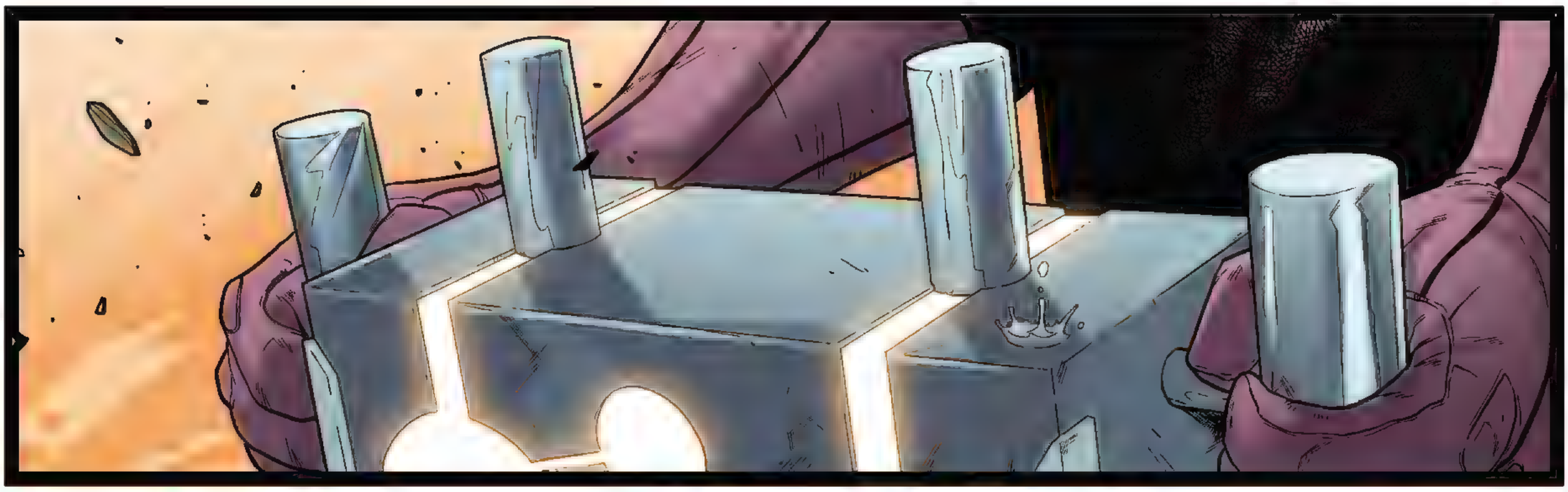
THEN DO IT, BOY. YOU'RE RUNNING OUT OF TIME.
DO IT!

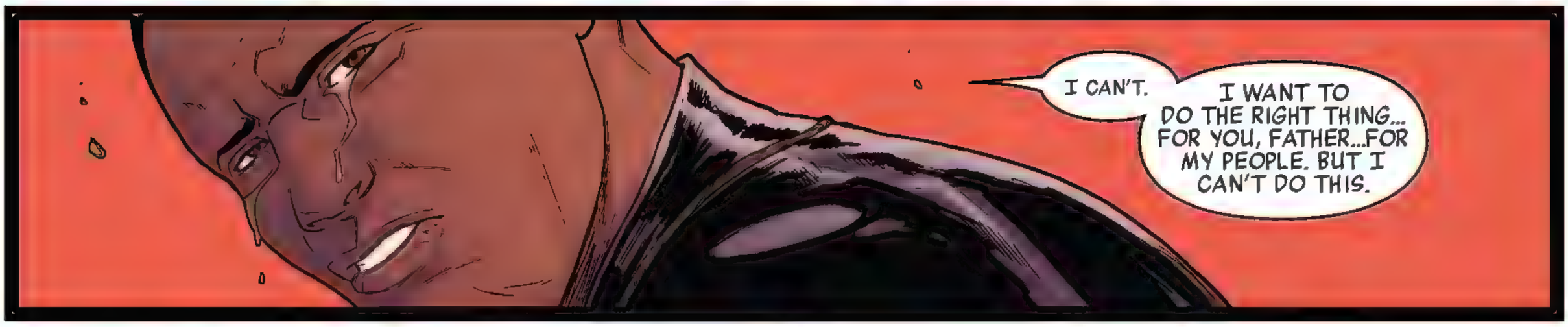
I KNOW I SHOULD...
I KNOW I MUST...BUT THE HORROR OF IT--THE INHUMANITY. MURDERING ALL THOSE PEOPLE, KILLING A WORLD.
IT'S...IT'S WRONG.


OF COURSE IT'S WRONG...
BUT YOU DO IT ANYWAY-- DUTY COMES WITH THE CROWN.


SHOULDN'T SUCH DUTY BE BENEATH US?
THE VERY NATURE OF IT... THE IGNOBILITY OF IT.

NOBILITY?
NONE OF THIS IS NOBLE... IT IS WHAT'S EXPECTED.
DO IT. NOW.



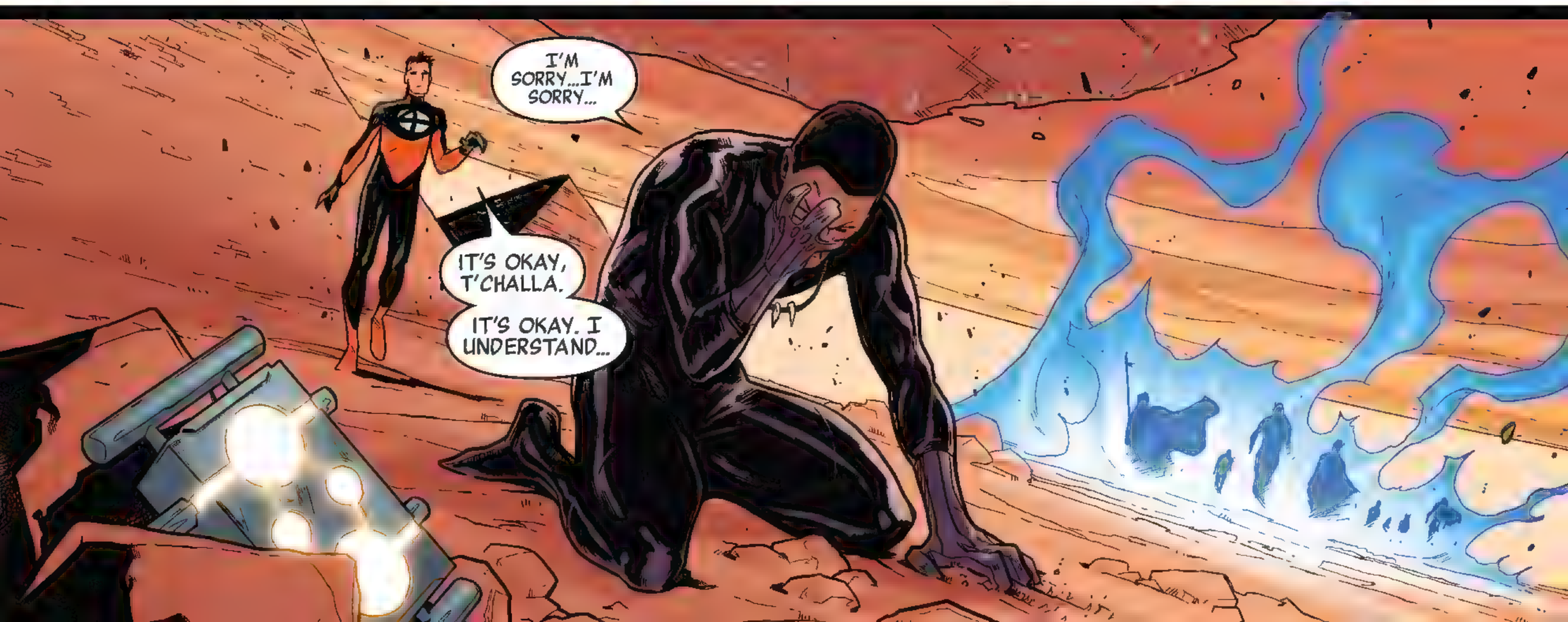

I CAN'T.
I WANT TO DO THE RIGHT THING... FOR YOU, FATHER...FOR MY PEOPLE. BUT I CAN'T DO THIS.

WE WERE CURSED WHEN WE MADE THIS MACHINE...
WE WERE DAMNED THE VERY DAY WE THOUGHT IT WAS FOR MEN TO DECIDE THINGS SUCH AS THIS.

DAMNED, T'CHALLA?
PERHAPS THAT WOULD BE FITTING...
BUT YOU STILL HAVE TIME.

IT...IS WRONG...
AND I CANNOT DO IT, FATHER!
I CANNOT.

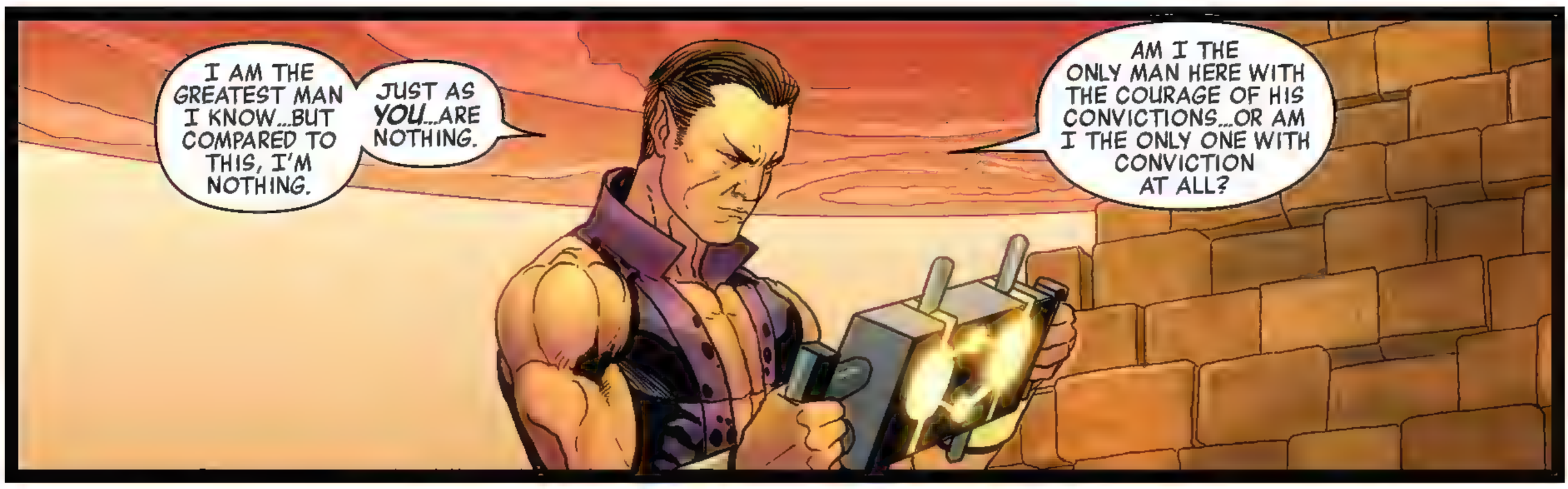
NO. YOU CHOOSE NOT TO-- IT IS YOUR CHOICE.
SO HERE IS MINE: THERE IS AN ETERNITY... AND IN IT, YOU ARE DEAD TO ME, AND TO US ALL.
YOU HAVE NO PEOPLE.
YOU ARE NO BLACK PANTHER.
YOU ARE NO LONGER MY SON.


I'M SORRY...I'M SORRY...
IT'S OKAY, T'CHALLA.
IT'S OKAY. I UNDERSTAND...

REED, I... I TRIED, BUT I...
COULDN'T DO IT, JUST LIKE ALL THE REST OF US. MAYBE THAT'S THE WAY TO SEE THIS...
WHEN WE GOT TO THE END OURSELVES, WE FOUND OUT THAT THERE WERE THINGS WE WOULD NOT DO...

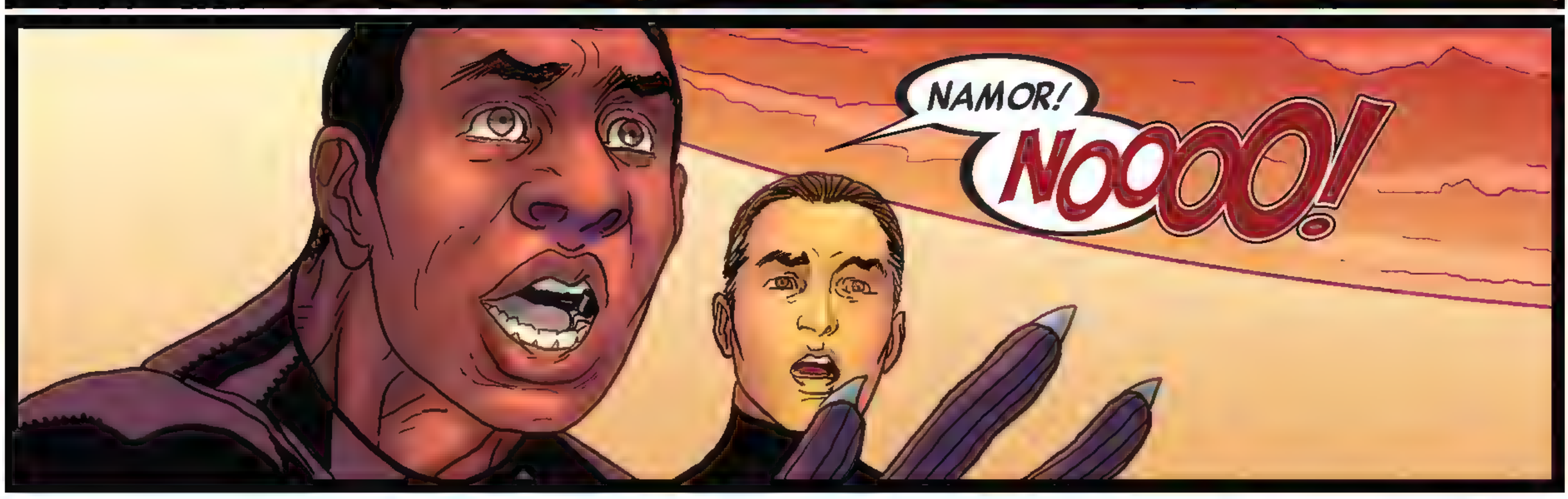
AND YOU KNOW...I AM NOT ASHAMED OF THAT. YOU SHOULDN'T BE EITHER...
IT MATTERS.

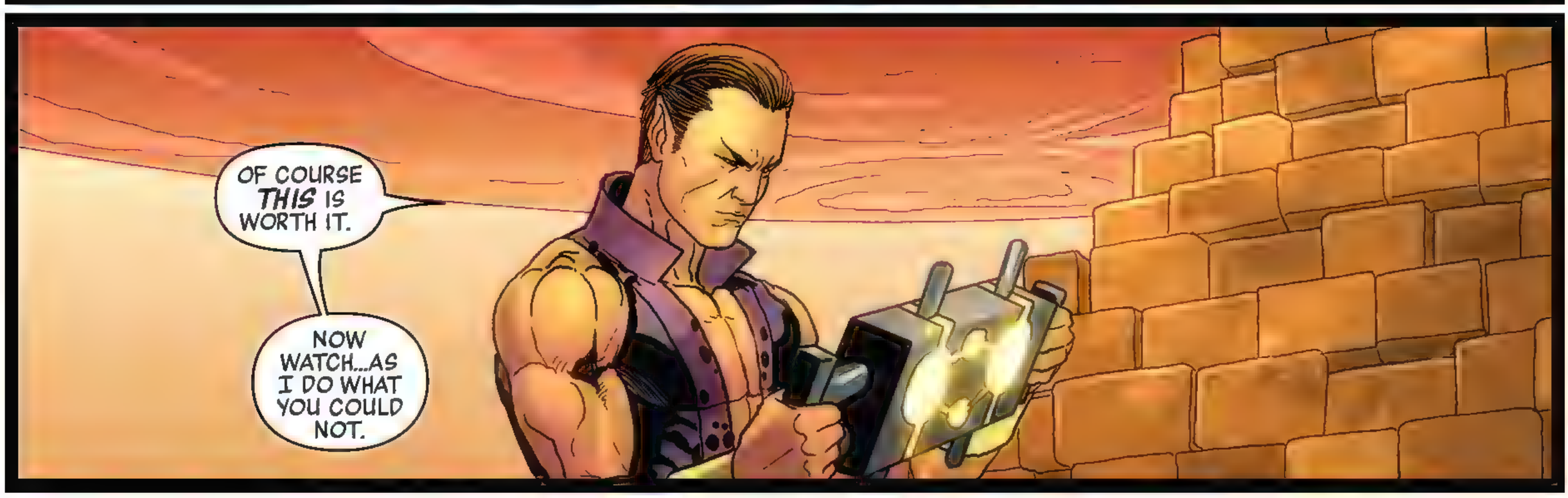
"IT MATTERS."
THE WAY YOU PEOPLE TALK ABOUT YOUR LIVES-- LIKE THEY MEAN SOMETHING...
"IT MATTERS."


I AM THE GREATEST MAN I KNOW...BUT COMPARED TO THIS, I'M NOTHING.
JUST AS YOU...ARE NOTHING.
AM I THE ONLY MAN HERE WITH THE COURAGE OF HIS CONVICTIONS...OR AM I THE ONLY ONE WITH CONVICTION AT ALL?

NAMOR... DON'T...
IT'S NOT WORTH IT.
THESE LINES YOU WON'T CROSS... THESE THINGS YOU WON'T DO...

THEY SHAME YOU.
HOW DARE ANY OF YOU PUT YOURSELF--YOUR DAMNED MORALS--ABOVE THE LIVES OF EVERY LIVING THING?
THE TRUTH IS, YOU PEOPLE AREN'T WORTH THAT...AND NEITHER AM I. OUR LIVES ARE A PITTANCE.
A PETTY, SMALL NOTHING...


NAMOR!
NOOOO!

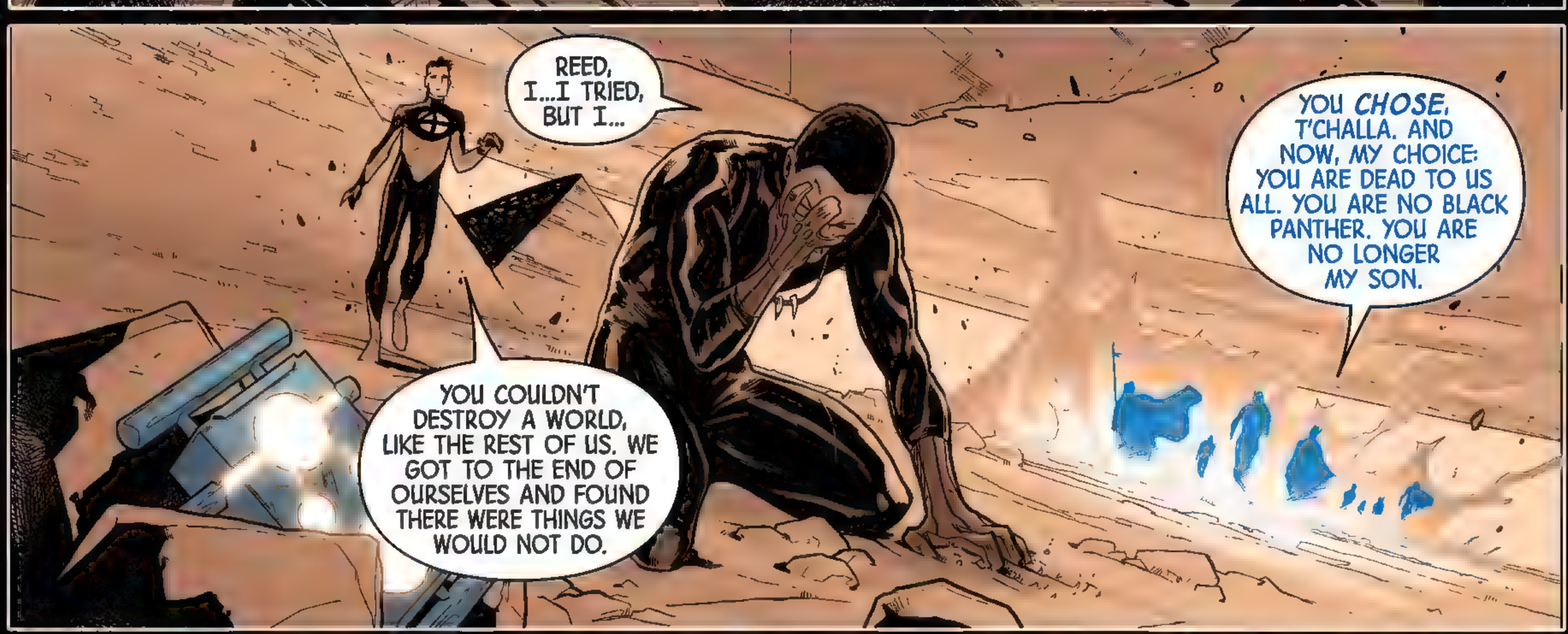

OF COURSE THIS IS WORTH IT.
NOW WATCH...AS I DO WHAT YOU COULD NOT.

NEW AVENGERS

ALL-NEW MARVEL NOW!

HICKMAN WALKER MARTIN

PREVIOUSLY IN NEW AVENGERS



THE ILLUMINATI

BLACK BOLT
Celestial Messiah

NAMOR
Imperius Rex

REED RICHARDS
Universal Builder

IRON MAN
Master of Machines

BEAST
Mutant Genius

DOCTOR STRANGE
Sorcerer Supreme

BLACK PANTHER
King of the Dead

HULK
Strongest There Is

"WE ARE NOT BROTHERS"

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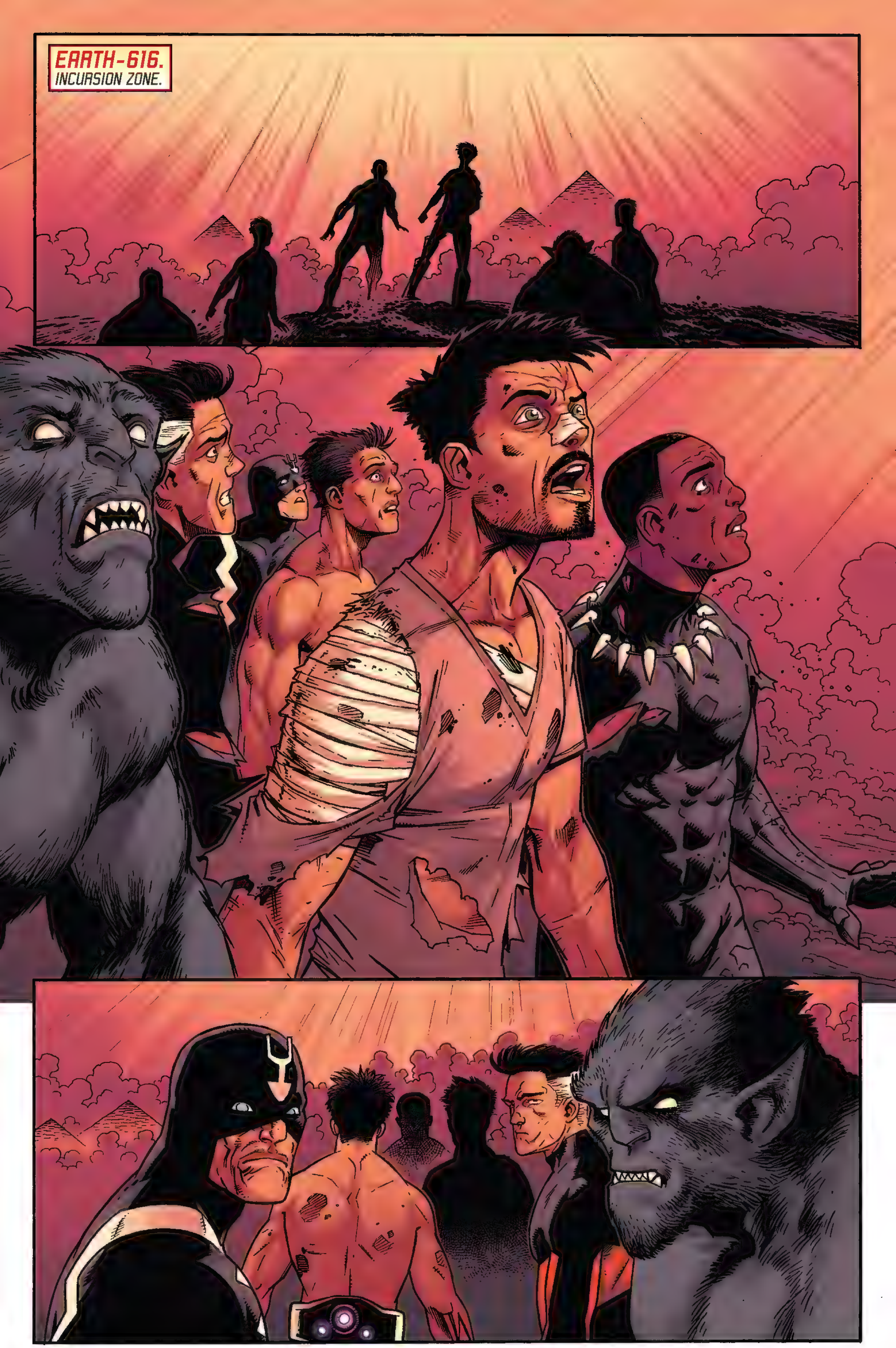
EARTH-4,290,001.


EARTH-616.
INCURSION ZONE.

SUCH A FRAGILE THING...
SIX POUNDS OF PRESSURE WAS ALL IT TOOK TO ACTIVATE A SWITCH, WHICH SENT AN ELECTRIC CURRENT TO A TRANSPONDER THAT THEN SENT A SIGNAL.
I WONDER... HOW IS IT THAT A SIMPLE, INANIMATE OBJECT CAN HAVE SUCH POWER OVER AN ENTIRE TAPESTRY OF LIVES?
AND THEN I REMEMBER...
THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT IT WAS MADE TO DO.
WE MADE IT TO ERASE ALL OUR LEGACIES, AND RECAST US AS SOMETHING ELSE.
YOU KNOW WHAT THIS MAKES US, DON'T YOU?

FALLEN AT BEST.
AND AT WORST...
MONSTERS, NAMOR? HAVEN'T WE SECRETLY ALWAYS BEEN?
MEN LORDING OVER THE LIVES OF THEIR LESSERS? I WONDER NOW...
IF THE ROAD I HAVE TRAVELED ALWAYS LED ME HERE, WERE THE CHOICES ALONG THE WAY STILL ALL MINE?
I THINK THEY WERE.
I'M NOT A VICTIM. I'M NOT A PAWN. I CHOSE THIS.
FOR THEY HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THE DARK ARTS.
STRANGE ISN'T WRONG. WHAT WE DID WAS WITH OPEN EYES...
BUT WE MADE OUR CHOICE-- I MADE MY CHOICE...AND THEN YOU TOOK IT FROM ME.
I DIDN'T DO THIS. YOU DID.
BECAUSE YOU COULDN'T.

IS THAT IT?
IS THAT ALL YOU HAVE?

AAARRGHHHH!
MY GOD... THEY'RE GOING TO KILL EACH OTHER.
UHF!

I THOUGHT WE HAD AN UNDERSTANDING, T'CHALLA...
WHACK!
NAMOR! STOP THIS!
BEFORE IT GOES TOO FAR!
TOO FAR, REED?
IS THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN SOMETHING NOW?
WAKE UP. ALL OF YOU. WE HAVE BEEN PROLONGING THIS FOR MONTHS...EACH OF US KNOWING HOW IT ENDS. EACH OF US EMBRACING--NOT REJECTING--IT.
THIS IS WHO WE ARE.
I DIDN'T BELIEVE THAT. I BELIEVED WE WOULD FIND A WAY OUT.
I DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD END LIKE THIS.

THEN YOU ARE A FOOL, ANTHONY.
BUT HOMO SAPIENS AS A NATURAL BORN KILLER? I LIKE TO THINK I HAD EVOLVED INTO SOMETHING MORE...
AND NOT SIMPLY SOMETHING MORE PROFICIENT.
IT DOESN'T MATTER *WHAT* WE ARE NOW, HENRY... ALL THAT MATTERS IS THAT WE ARE *RIGHT*.
THIS WAS... *OUR ONLY CHOICE...*
AND IN ALL YOUR WEAKNESS, I MADE IT FOR YOU.
SO I AM OWED YOUR THANKS.

BUUMMFF!
ARGGGH!
YOU ARE OWED NOTHING. OTHER MEN DO NOT MAKE CHOICES FOR ME, NAMOR.
ESPECIALLY NOT YOU...
SHRING!
EVERY BREATH YOU TAKE IS MERCY FROM ME...

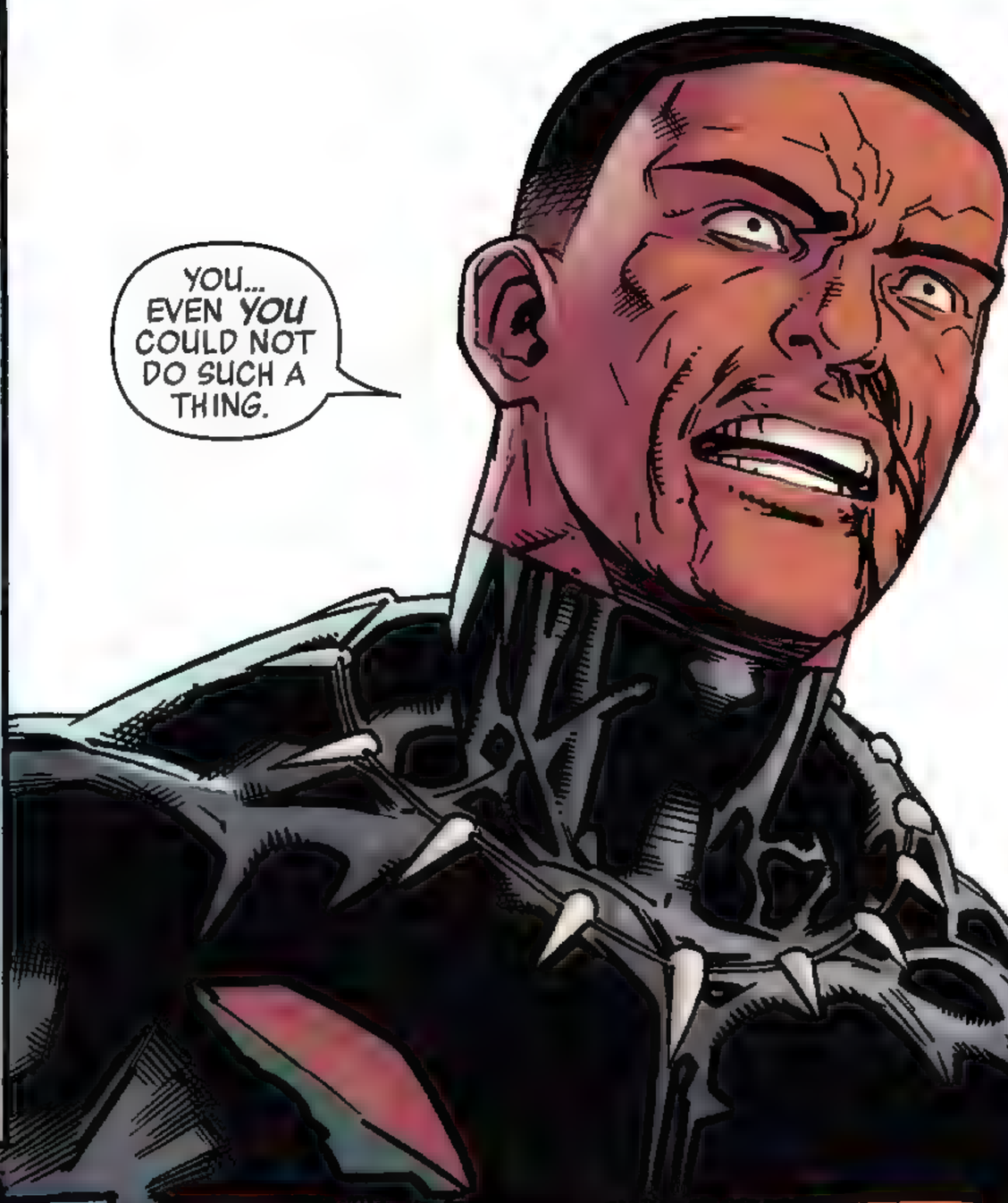
AND NOW I'M ALL OUT.
ZZZRRRRRRR!
THIS IS HOW YOU WILL BE REMEMBERED, NAMOR...

YOU...ON YOUR KNEES... BEFORE ME.
SSIZZZZZUL!
ARRGHHHHH!

ENOUGH.
BOTH OF YOU, END THIS RIGHT NOW.
LOOK AROUND. A TERRIBLE THING HAS BEEN DONE...AND THE GREATER TRAGEDY IS THAT WE ARE NO CLOSER TO FINDING A WAY TO STOP THIS FROM HAPPENING AGAIN.
AND MAKE NO MISTAKE...IT *CANNOT* HAPPEN AGAIN. BUT WE HAVE TO MOVE FORWARD...
UNDERSTAND?
IT'S DONE-- *OVER* WE'VE CROSSED THE RUBICON AND THERE IS NO COMING BACK. BUT IF WE ARE LOST, THEN THE *ONE THING* WE CAN DO IS FIND A--
I DID IT.

IT WAS ME.
WE KNOW THAT.
NO...
IT. WAS. ME.
WHAT ARE YOU...
WHEN THE ARMIES OF THANOS CAME, THEY FOUND A BROKEN ATLANTIS--THE WORK OF WAKANDA.
THE CULL OBSIDIAN--THANOS' BLACK ORDER--WANTED THE INFINITY GEMS, AND DO YOU KNOW WHAT I DID TO SAVE WHAT WAS LEFT OF MY PEOPLE, T'CHALLA?
I TOLD A LIE.

I TOLD THANOS' GENERALS WHERE TO LOOK.
I TOLD THEM IF THEY SEARCHED IN THE MOST WRETCHED, GOD-FORSAKEN LAND ON THIS ENTIRE EARTH THEY WOULD FIND WHERE THE GEMS WERE HIDDEN.
WAKANDA.


YOU... EVEN YOU COULD NOT DO SUCH A THING.

OH, I DID.
AND I WOULD DO IT AGAIN.

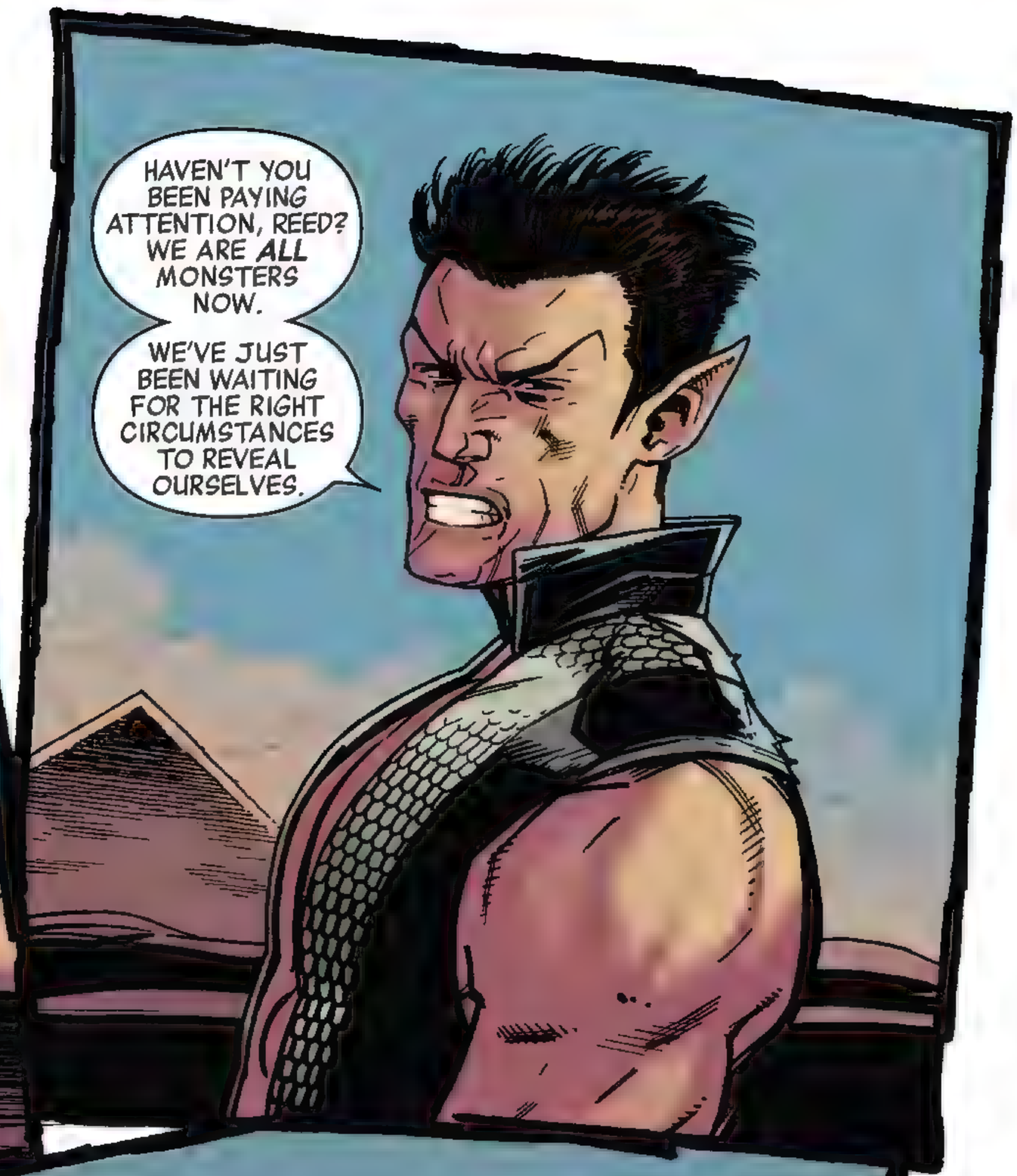
I DROWNED YOUR PEOPLE ONCE, AND THEN WHEN THEY DARED TO RAISE THEMSELVES UP, I BURNED THEM DOWN AGAIN.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT I REGRET, KING OF THE DEAD?
THAT SO MANY WERE LEFT ALIVE.

BUT I WANT YOU TO KNOW ONE THING: OF THOSE THAT REMAIN...
EVERY BREATH THEY TAKE...IS MERCY...FROM ME.

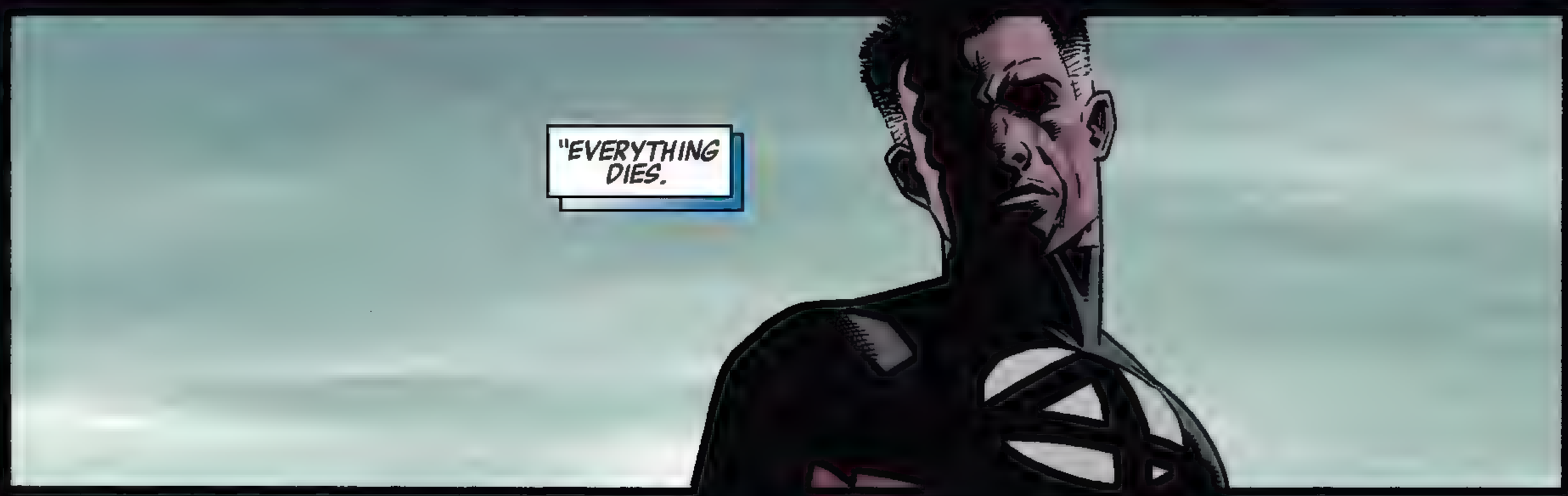
RARARRRR!
LET GO OF ME!
LET ME GO!
GET OUT OF HERE, NAMOR.

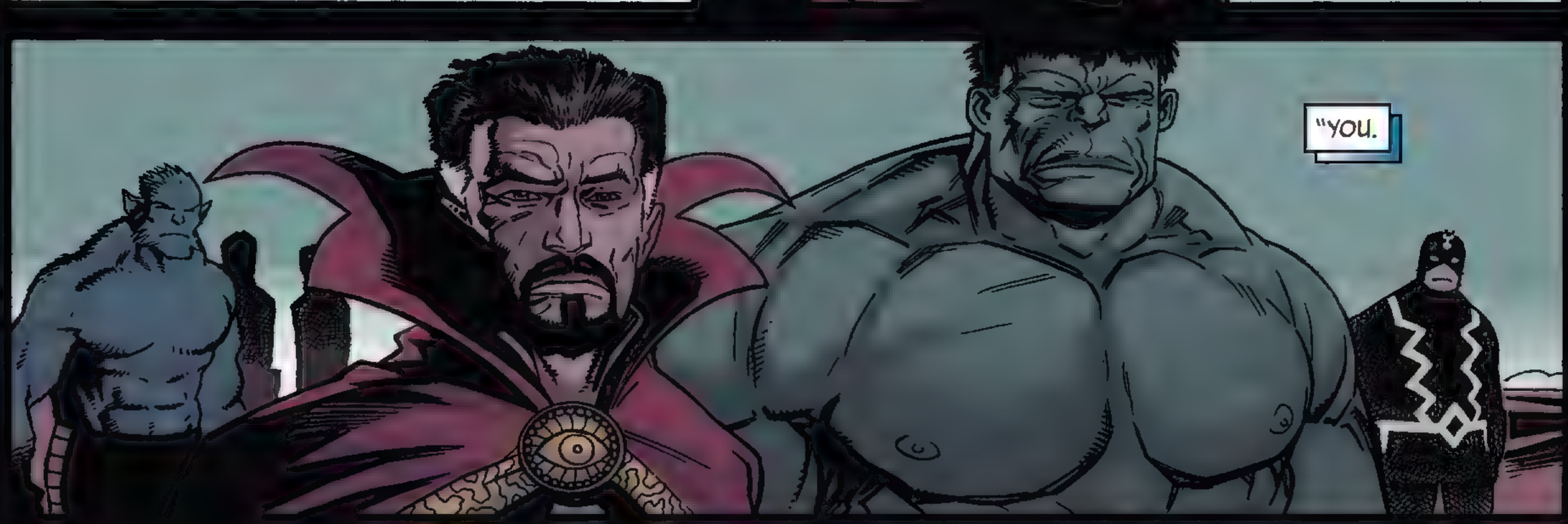
WHEN DID YOU BECOME SUCH A MONSTER?


HAVEN'T YOU BEEN PAYING ATTENTION, REED? WE ARE ALL MONSTERS NOW.
WE'VE JUST BEEN WAITING FOR THE RIGHT CIRCUMSTANCES TO REVEAL OURSELVES.

LEAVE. NOW!

I'M GOING TO KILL YOU, NAMOR!
IF IT'S THE ONLY THING I DO BEFORE I DIE...
I WILL KILL YOU!

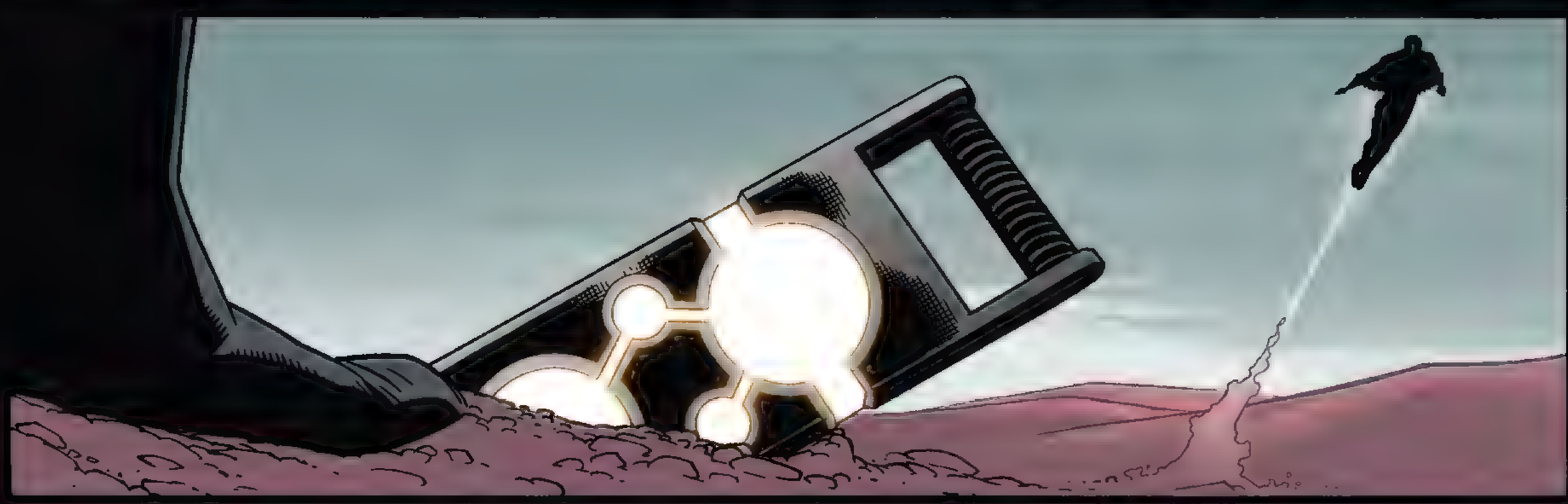

"EVERYTHING DIES.


"YOU.

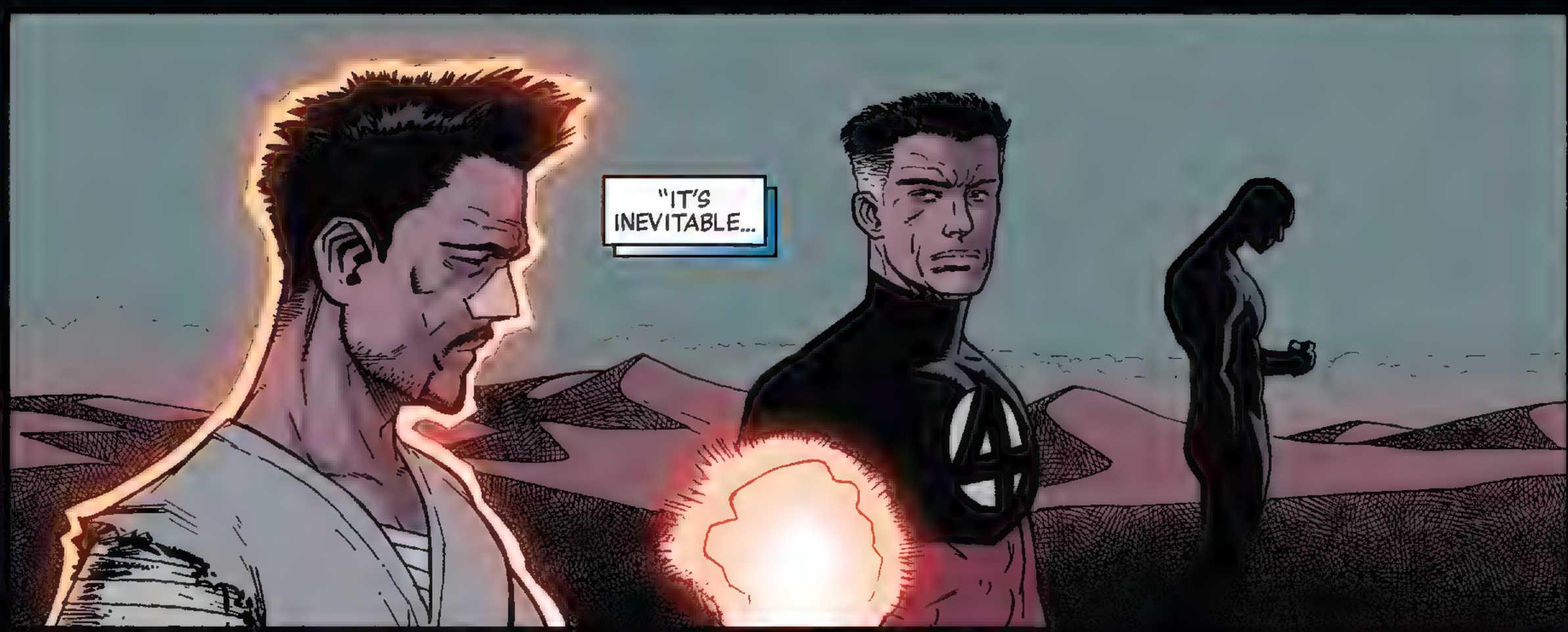
"ME.

"EVERYONE ON THIS PLANET.

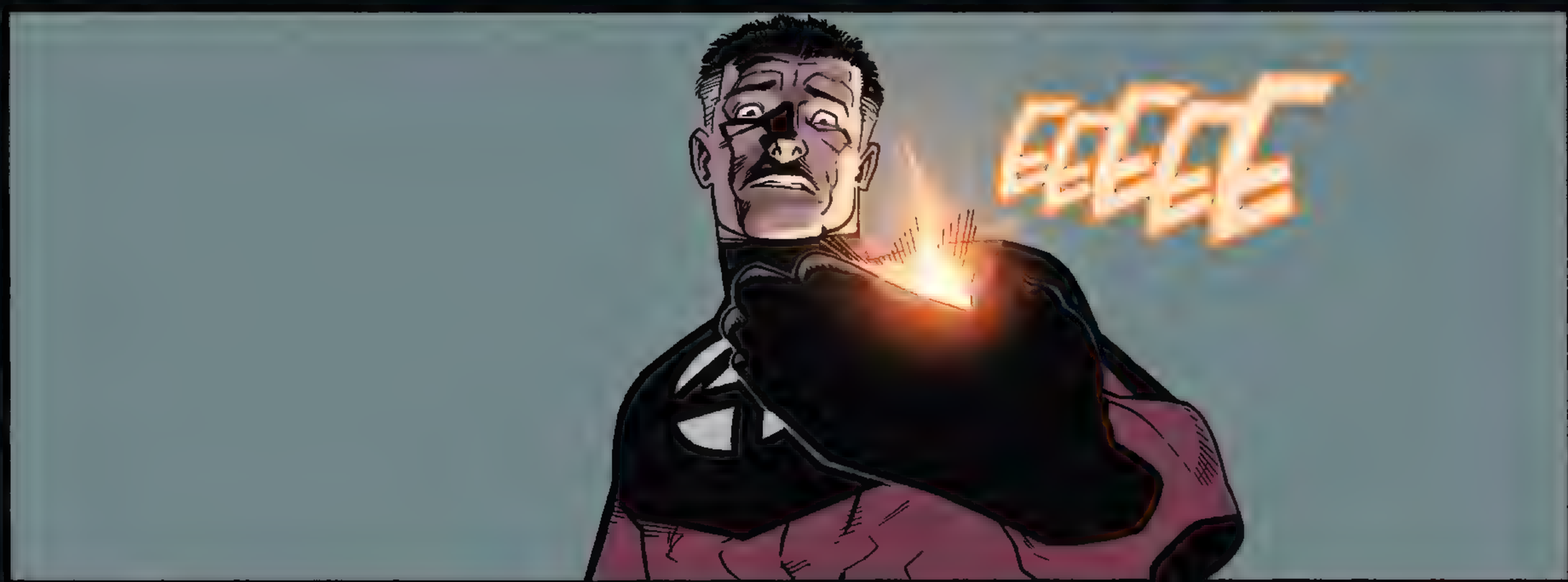
"OUR SUN. OUR GALAXY. AND, EVENTUALLY, THE UNIVERSE ITSELF.

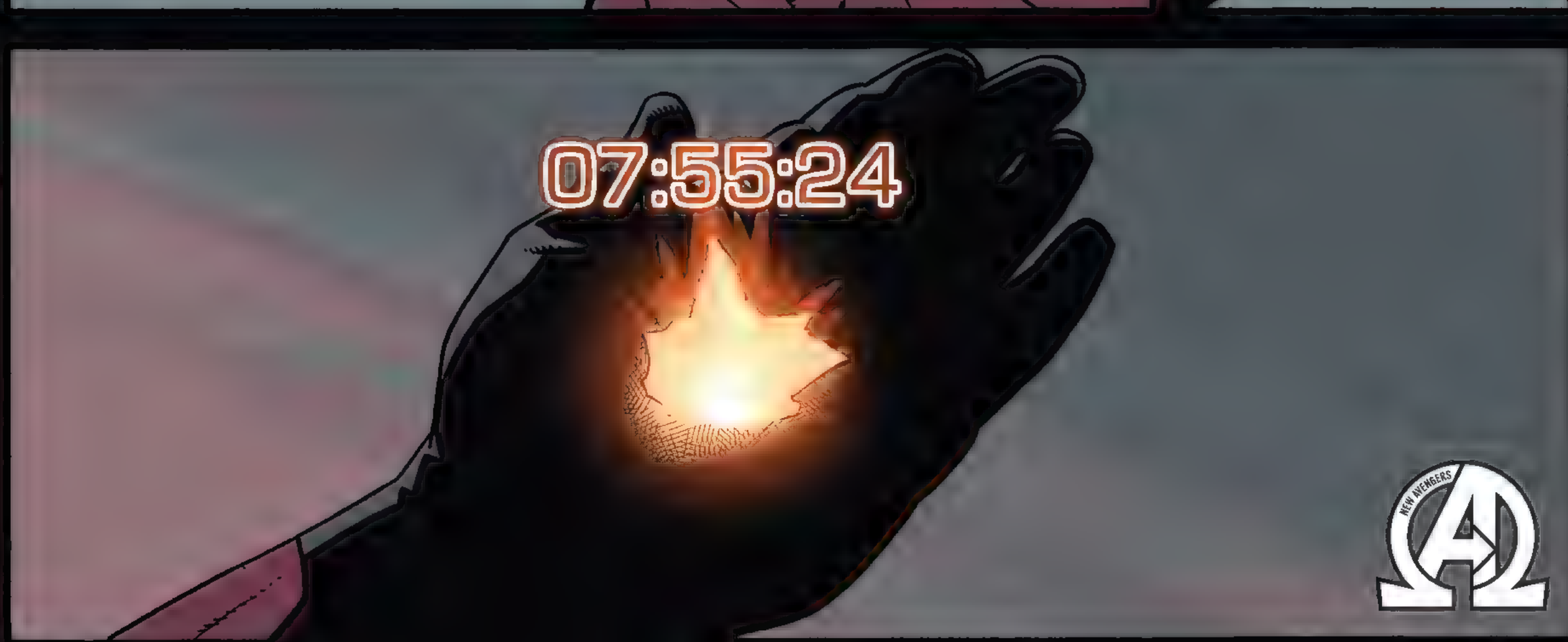


"THIS IS SIMPLY HOW THINGS ARE.


"IT'S INEVITABLE...

"AND I ACCEPT IT."
EEEE


EEEE

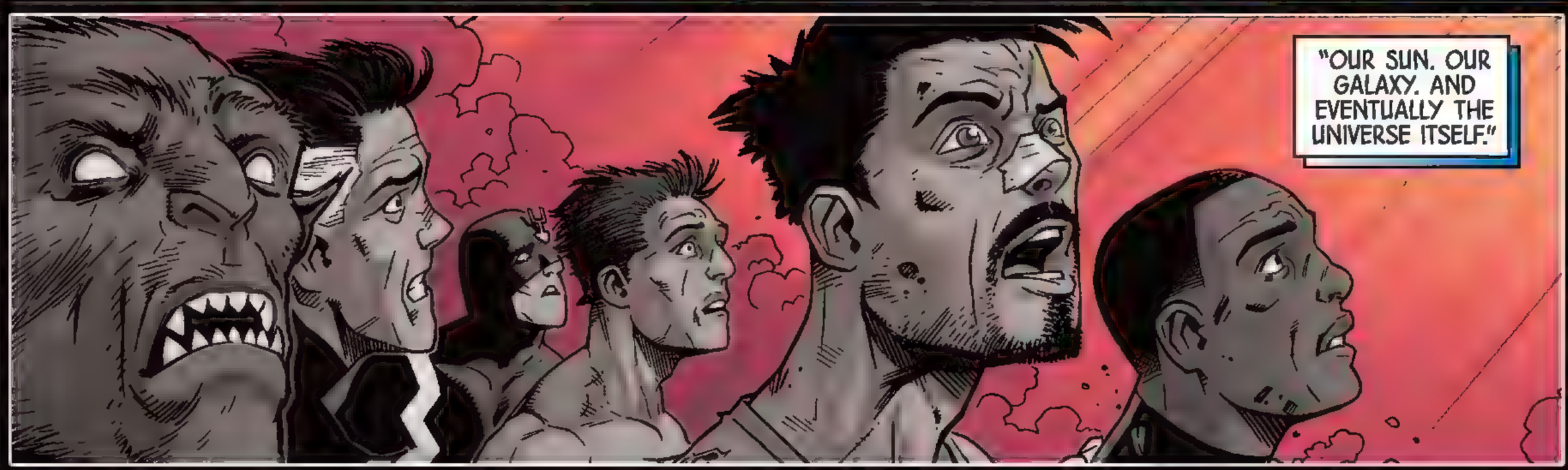

07:55:24

ALL-NEW MARVEL NOW!

HICKMAN
WALKER
MARTIN

023

PREVIOUSLY IN NEW AVENGERS



THE ILLUMINATI

BLACK BOLT
Celestial Messiah

NAMOR
Imperius Rex

REED RICHARDS
Universal Builder

IRON MAN
Master of Machines

BEAST
Mutant Genius

DOCTOR STRANGE
Sorcerer Supreme

BLACK PANTHER
King of the Dead

HULK
Strongest There Is

YOUNG BEAST

WONG

STORM

SUSAN RICHARDS

VALERIA RICHARDS

KRISTOFF VERNARD

DR. DOOM

LOCKJAW

MAXIMUS

BLACK SWAN

TERRAX

THANOS

PROXIMA MIDNIGHT

CORVUS GLAIVE

"ALL THE ANGELS HAVE FALLEN"

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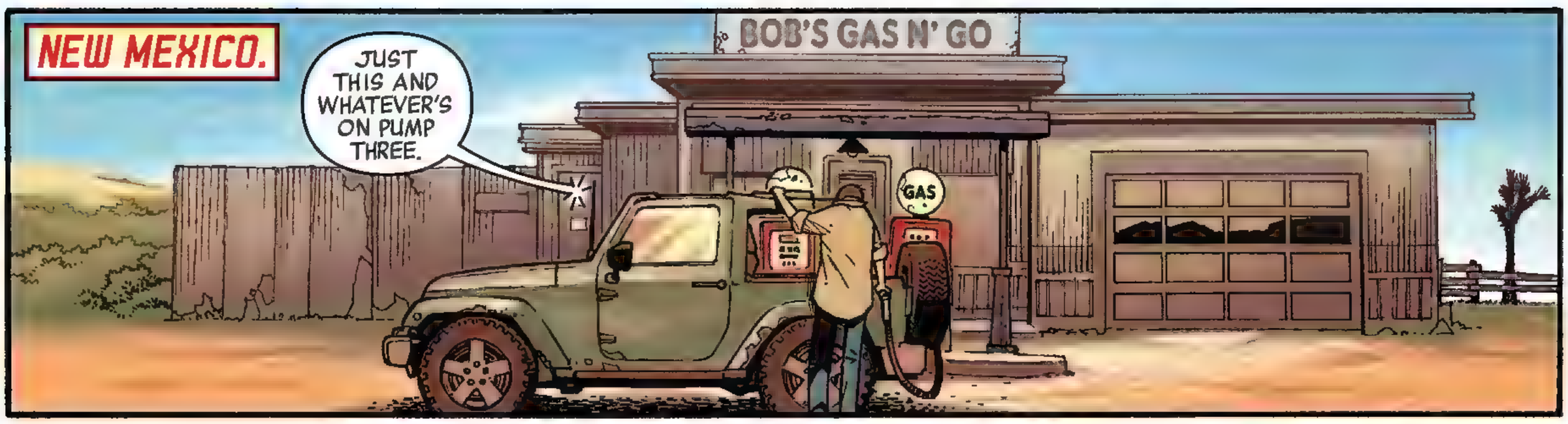
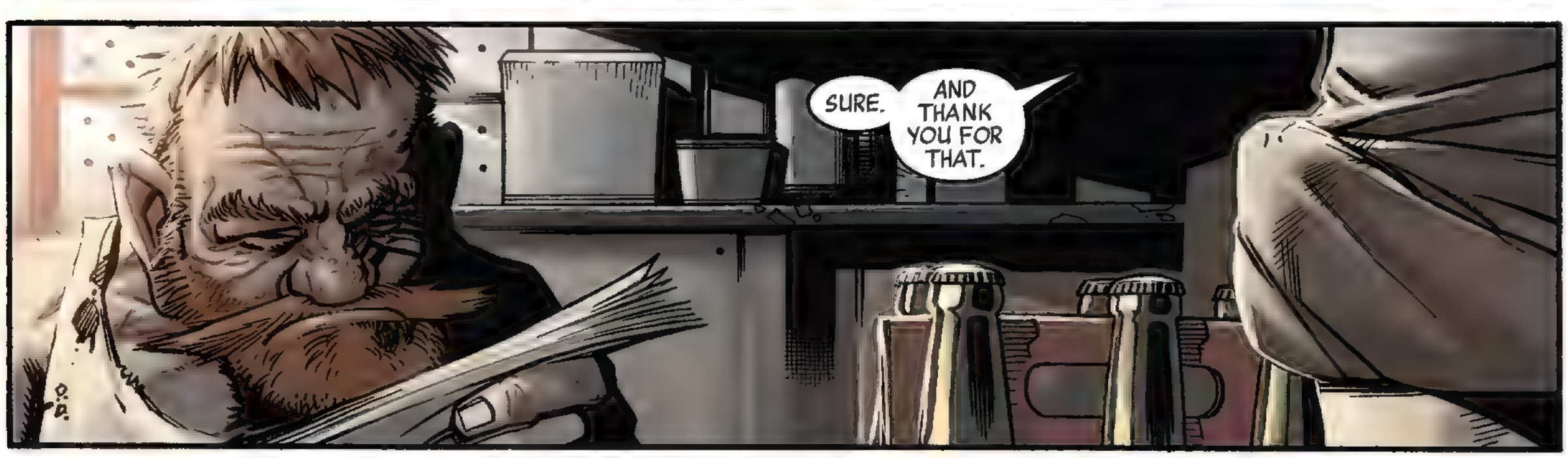
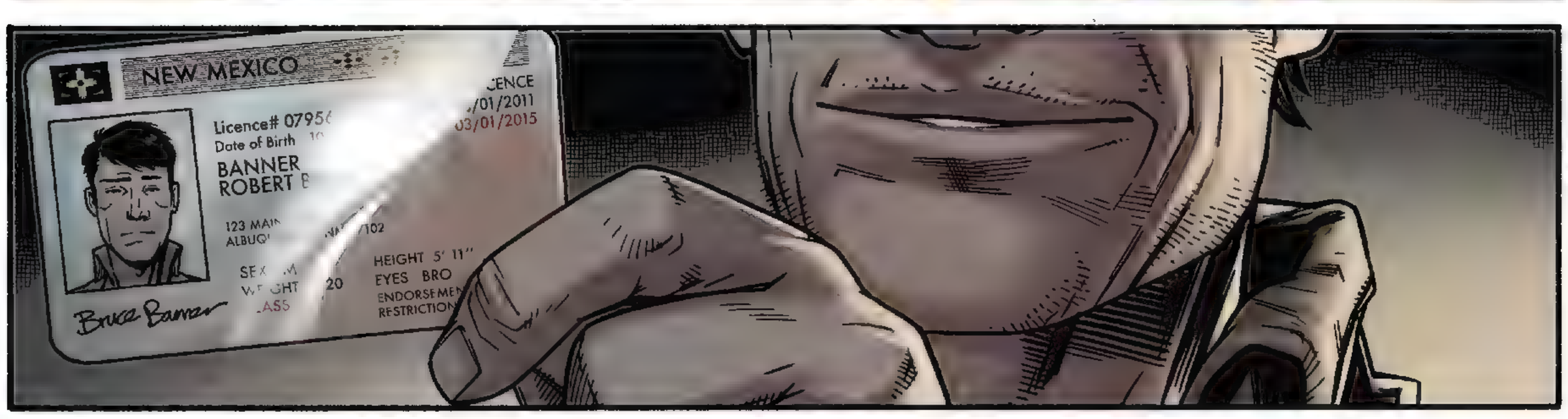
"THEN THERE'S ONLY ONE THING LEFT TO DO.

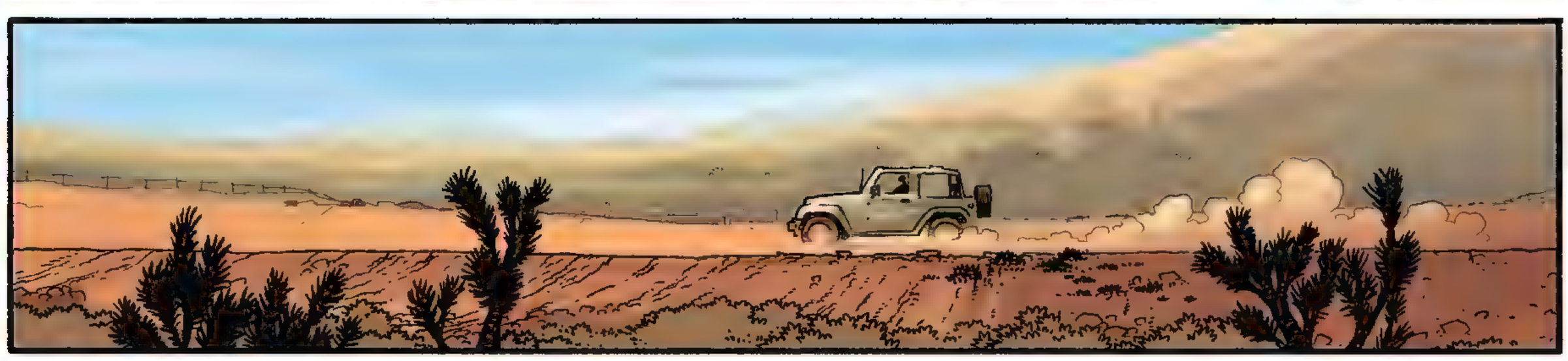
"WE DIE, REED...AND HOPEFULLY BETTER THAN WE LIVED."

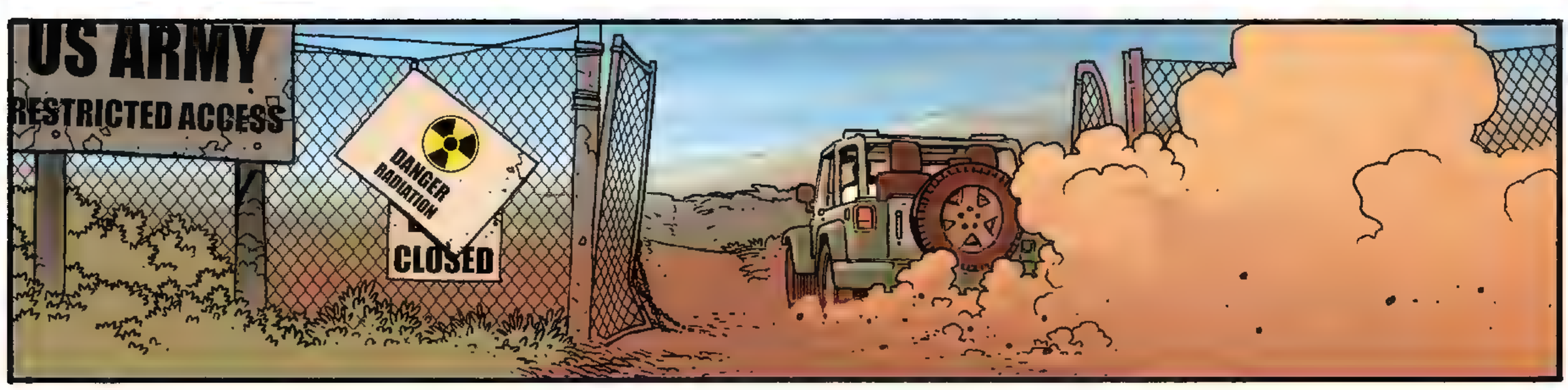

NEW MEXICO.
JUST THIS AND WHATEVER'S ON PUMP THREE.
BOB'S GAS N' GO
GAS

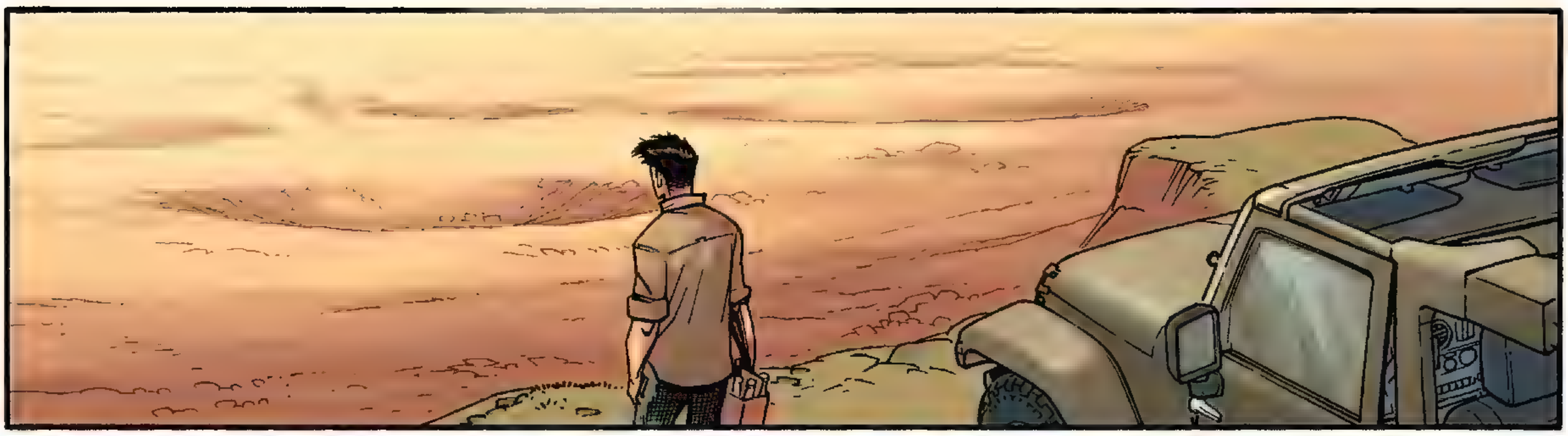
NEED TO SEE SOME I.D.

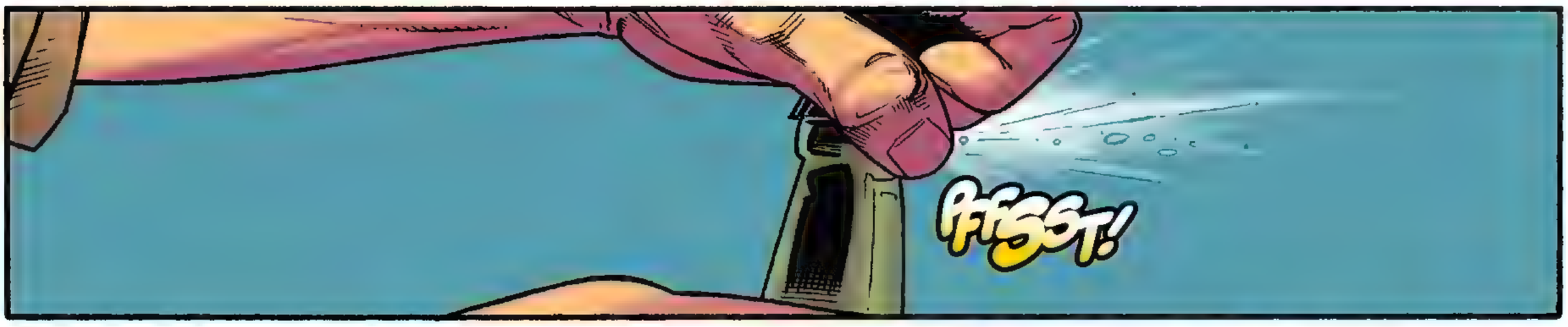

SURE.
AND THANK YOU FOR THAT.


NEW MEXICO
Licence# 0795
Date of Birth
BANNER
ROBERT
123 MAIN
ALBUQ
HEIGHT 5' 11"
EYES BRO
ENDORSEMEN
RESTRICTION
Bruce Banner

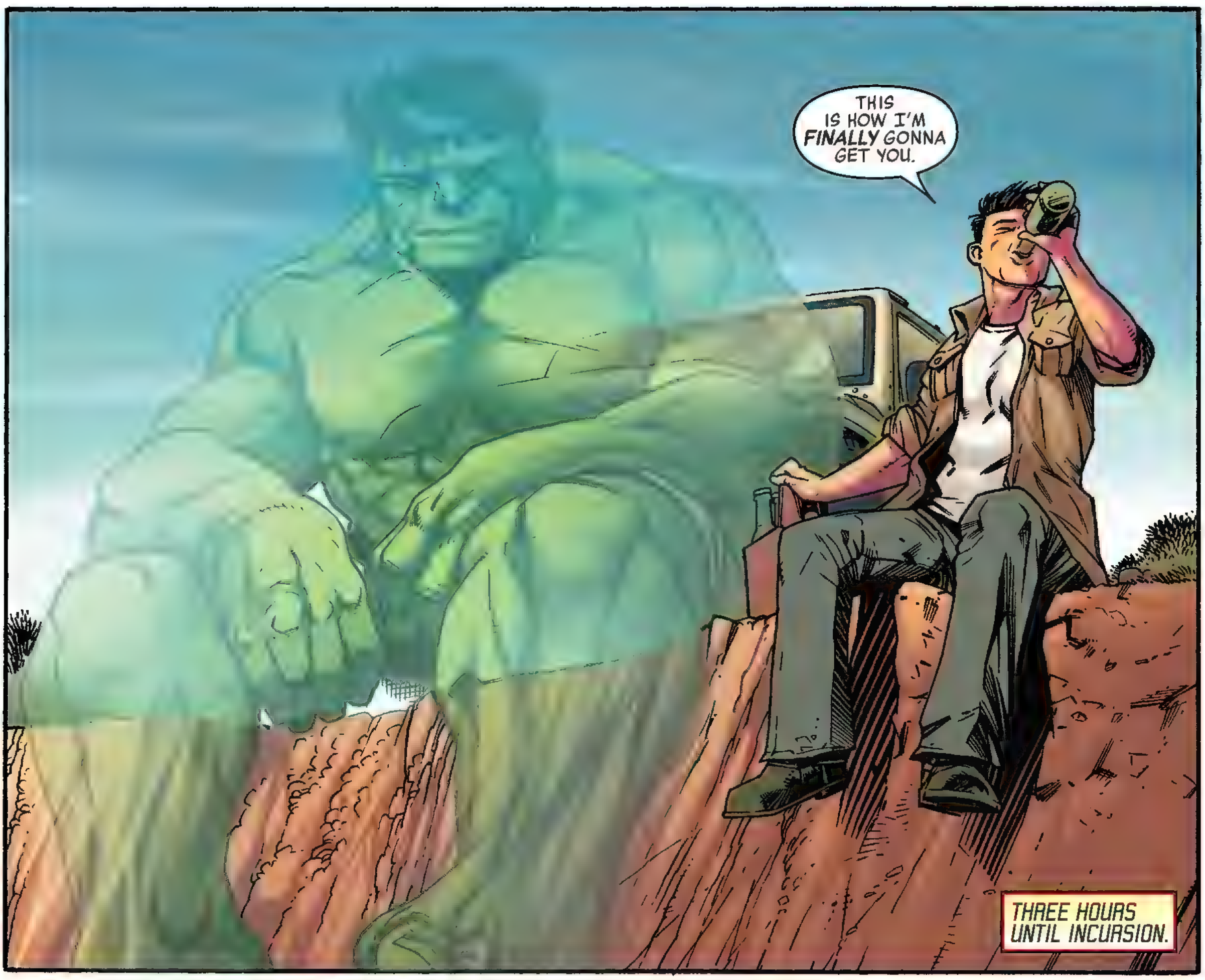


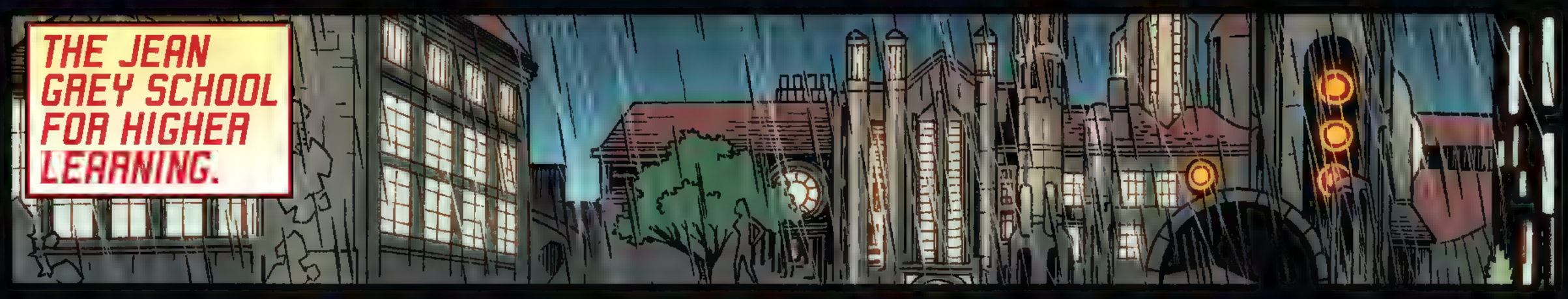

US ARMY
RESTRICTED ACCESS
DANGER
RADIATION
CLOSED



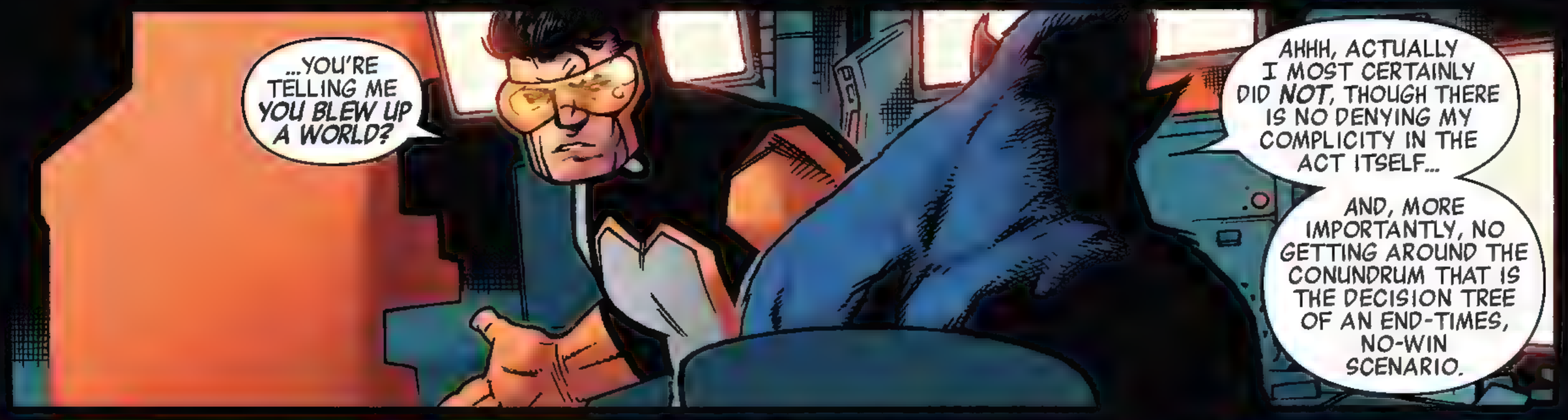

PFSST!

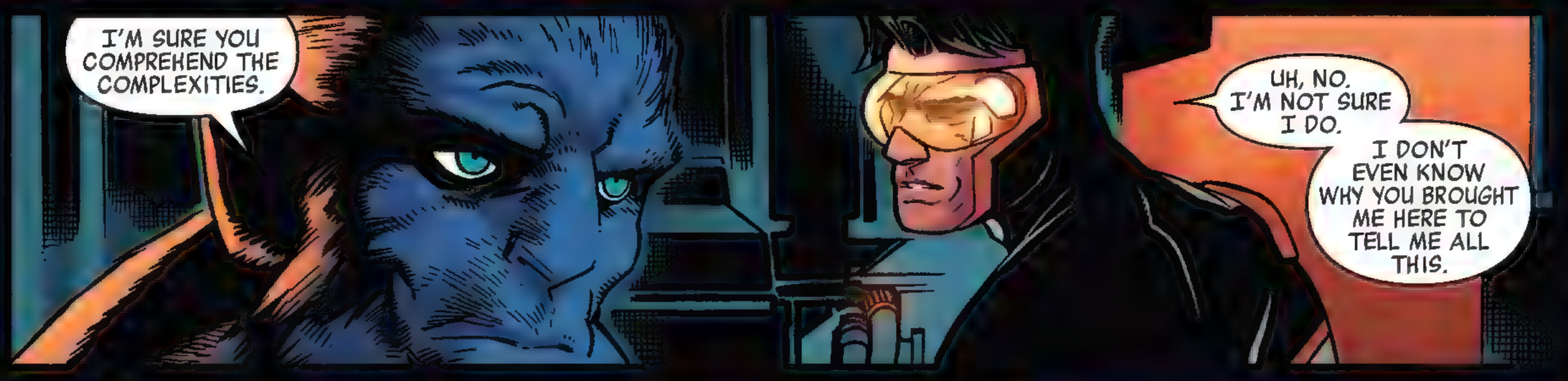
THIS IS IT, BIG GUY...
END OF THE WORLD.

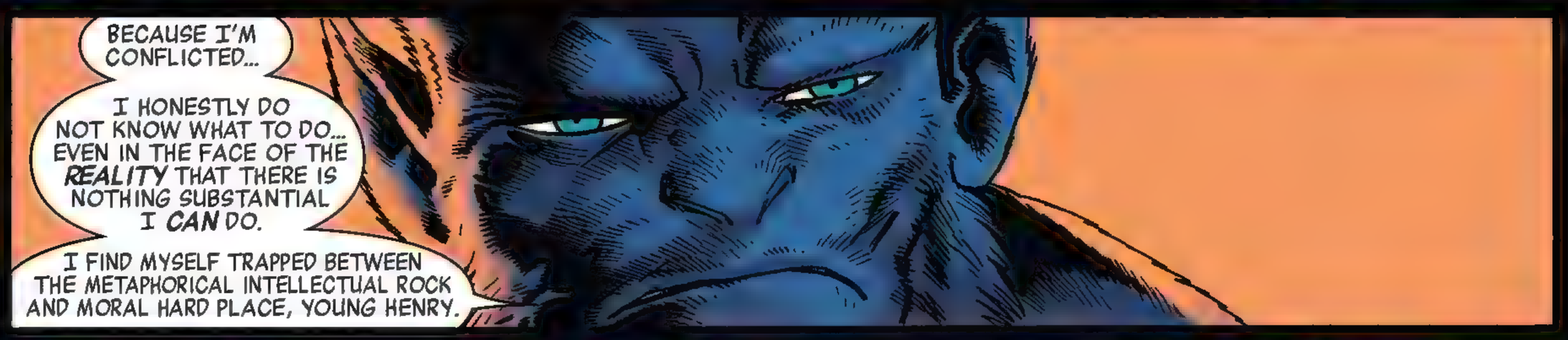

THIS IS HOW I'M FINALLY GONNA GET YOU.
THREE HOURS UNTIL INCURSION.

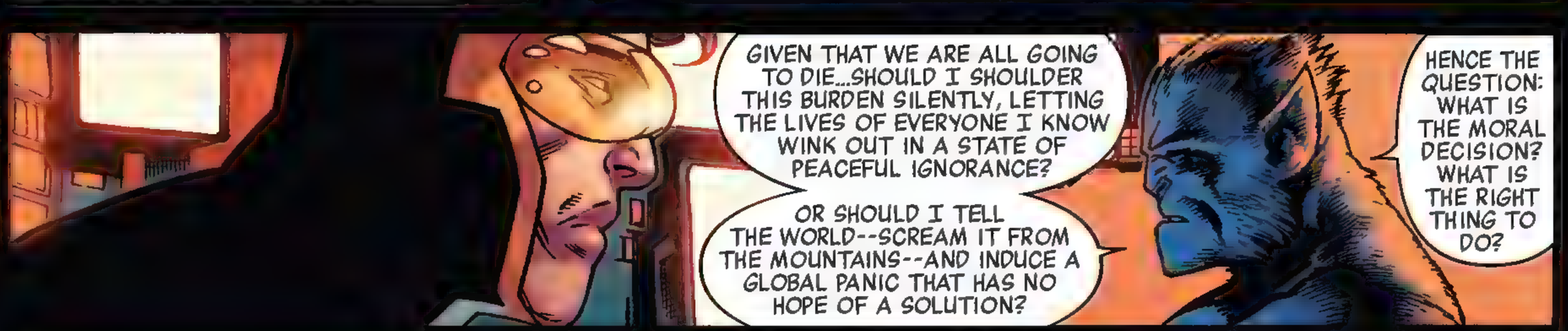

THE JEAN GREY SCHOOL FOR HIGHER LEARNING.

02:36:12
SO IF I UNDERSTAND YOU CORRECTLY...


...YOU'RE TELLING ME YOU BLEW UP A WORLD?
AHHH, ACTUALLY I MOST CERTAINLY DID NOT, THOUGH THERE IS NO DENYING MY COMPLICITY IN THE ACT ITSELF...
AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, NO GETTING AROUND THE CONUNDRUM THAT IS THE DECISION TREE OF AN END-TIMES, NO-WIN SCENARIO.

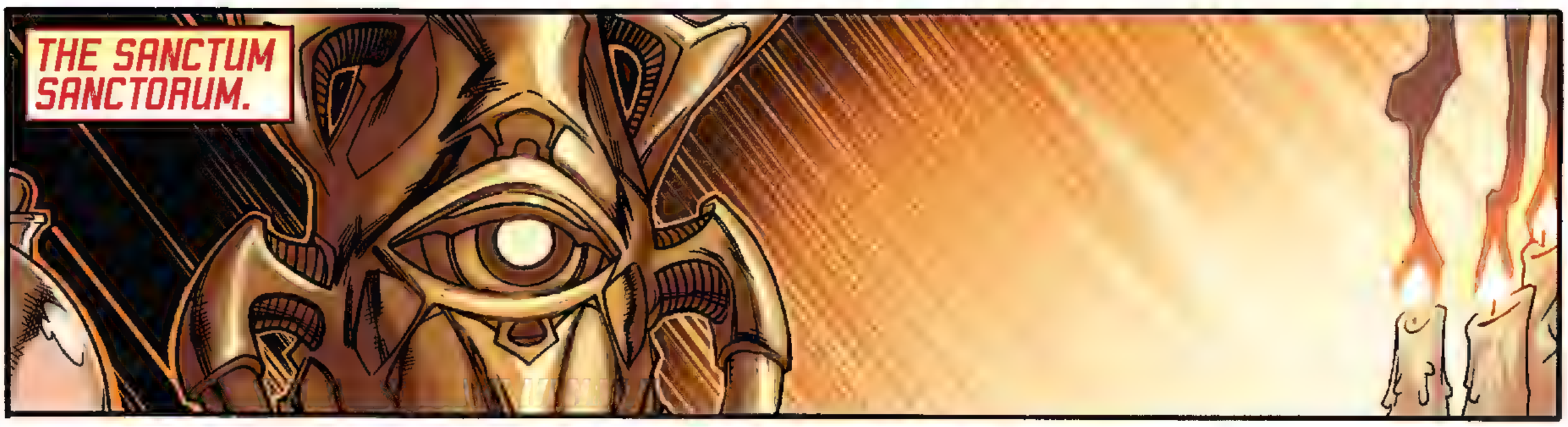

I'M SURE YOU COMPREHEND THE COMPLEXITIES.
UH, NO. I'M NOT SURE I DO.
I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHY YOU BROUGHT ME HERE TO TELL ME ALL THIS.


BECAUSE I'M CONFLICTED...
I HONESTLY DO NOT KNOW WHAT TO DO... EVEN IN THE FACE OF THE REALITY THAT THERE IS NOTHING SUBSTANTIAL I CAN DO.
I FIND MYSELF TRAPPED BETWEEN THE METAPHORICAL INTELLECTUAL ROCK AND MORAL HARD PLACE, YOUNG HENRY.


GIVEN THAT WE ARE ALL GOING TO DIE...SHOULD I SHOULDER THIS BURDEN SILENTLY, LETTING THE LIVES OF EVERYONE I KNOW WINK OUT IN A STATE OF PEACEFUL IGNORANCE?
OR SHOULD I TELL THE WORLD--SCREAM IT FROM THE MOUNTAINS--AND INDUCE A GLOBAL PANIC THAT HAS NO HOPE OF A SOLUTION?
HENCE THE QUESTION: WHAT IS THE MORAL DECISION? WHAT IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO?

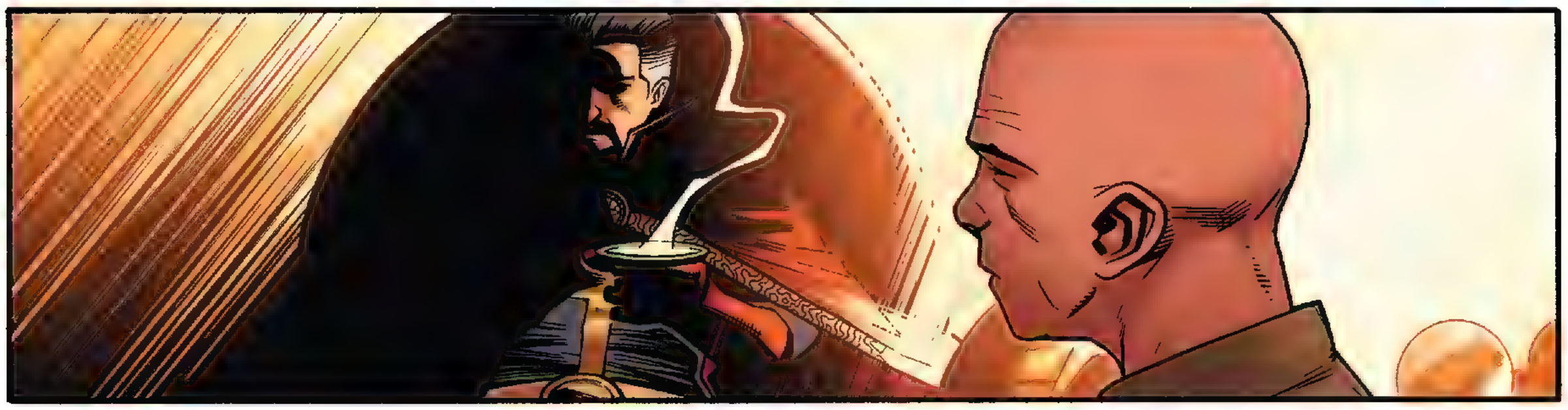
WHICH BRINGS US TO YOU...
WITH WHO ELSE COULD I TALK THIS THROUGH EXCEPT THE ONLY PERSON WHOSE OPINION I TRULY TRUST--ME.
SO...GIVEN THAT, WHAT DO YOU THINK?

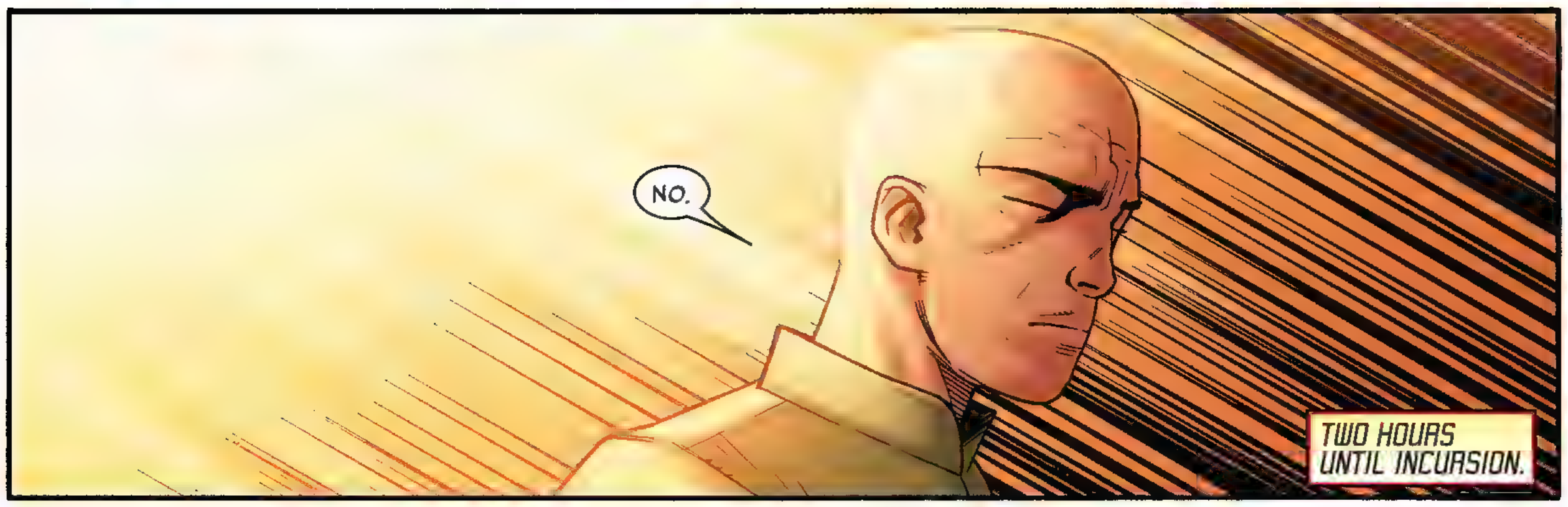
WHAT DO I THINK?
WELL, IF I'M BEING HONEST... I'M HAVING A BIT OF A HARD TIME WRAPPING MY MIND AROUND THIS...SITUATION.
FRANKLY, I'M STRUGGLING WITH ANOTHER ASPECT OF THIS.
WHICH IS?
HOW, GIVEN ALL THIS... GIVEN YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN IT...WELL...
HOW IN THE HELL DID YOU THINK IT WAS FAIR TO BRING US INTO THE FUTURE AND MISS OUR ENTIRE LIVES IF ALL THAT WAS GOING TO HAPPEN WAS WE DIE?!
YES. I CAN SEE HOW THAT MIGHT PREOCCUPY THE MIND.
I'M SORRY, HENRY...HOPE IS A BLIND FOOL.
MY ACTIONS WERE... REGRETTABLE.
CAN I ASK YOU ANOTHER QUESTION, DOCTOR MCCOY?
OF COURSE.
DO YOU REMEMBER EXACTLY WHEN IT WAS THAT YOU COMPLETELY LOST YOUR WAY?
TWO POINT FIVE HOURS UNTIL INCURSION.


THE SANCTUM SANCTORUM.

THANK YOU, WONG.
THAT WILL BE ALL.
OF COURSE.

AND WONG...
YES, DOCTOR?
I HAVE SOMETHING THAT I... THAT...
YES?
AM I A GOOD MAN?

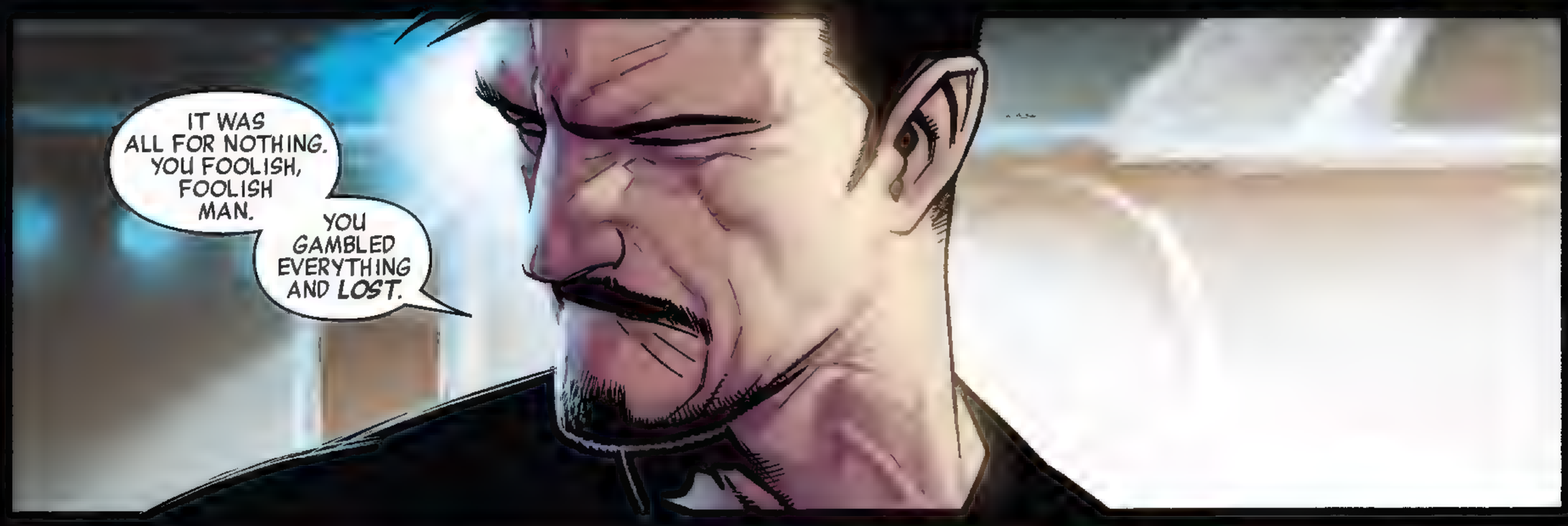


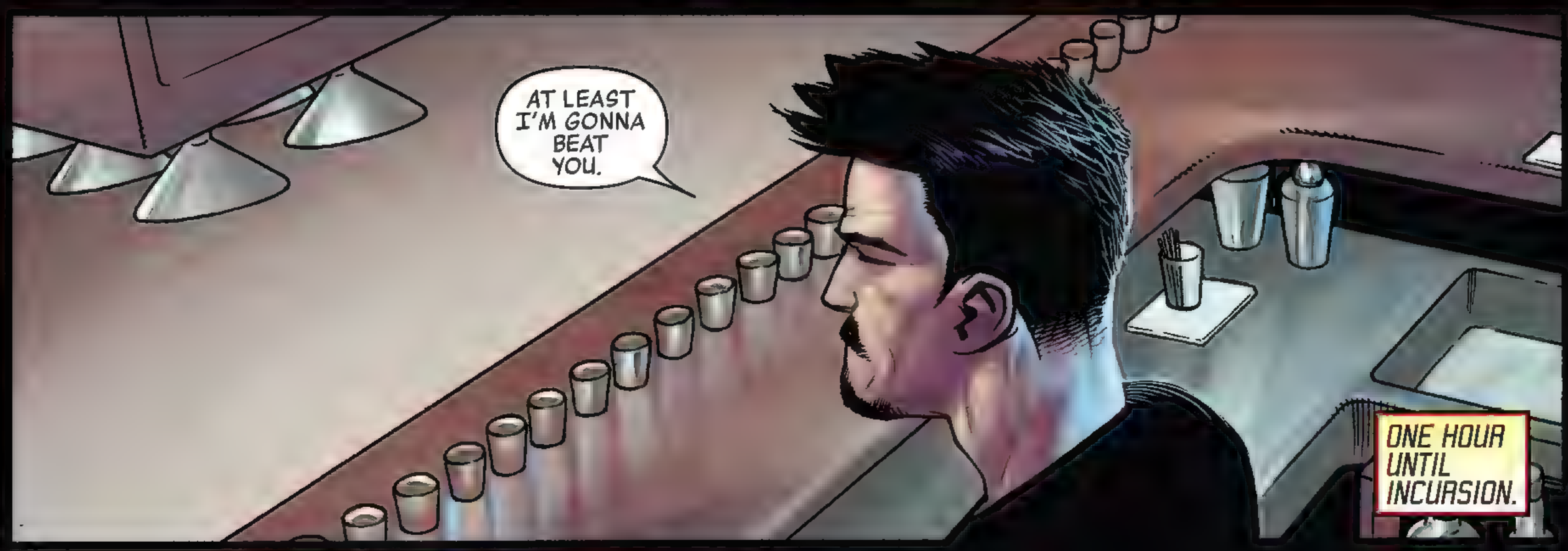

NO.
TWO HOURS UNTIL INCURSION.

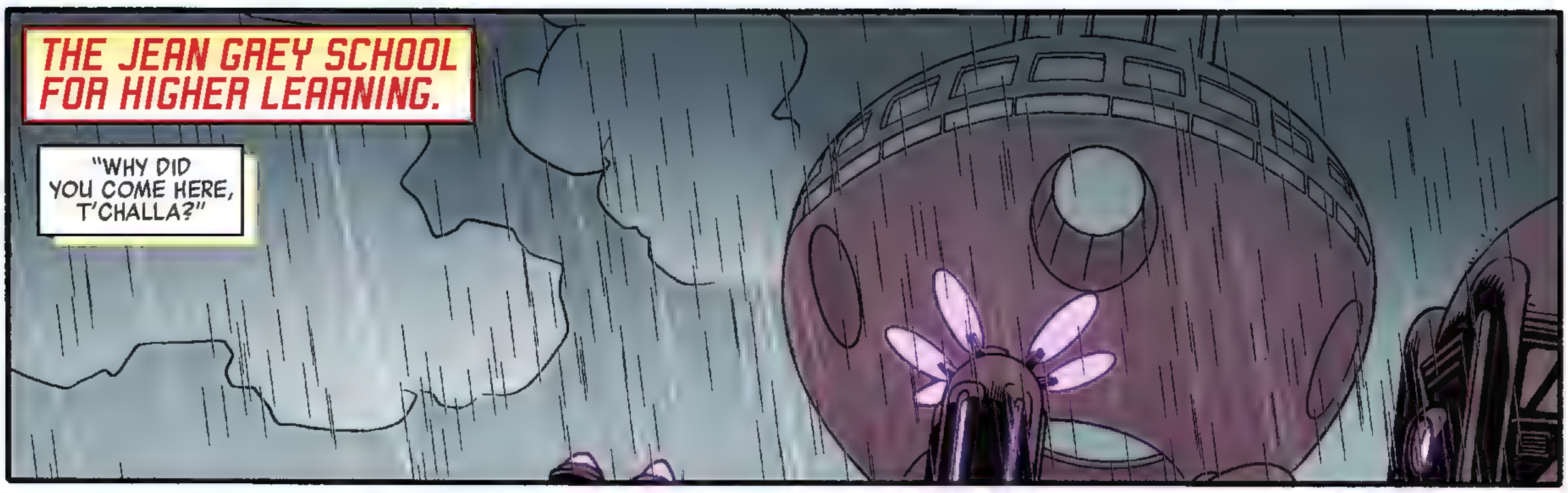
STARK RESIDENCE.
THE HAMPTONS.
SO, TONY... ARE YOU FALLEN?
A BROKEN MACHINE BEYOND REPAIR?

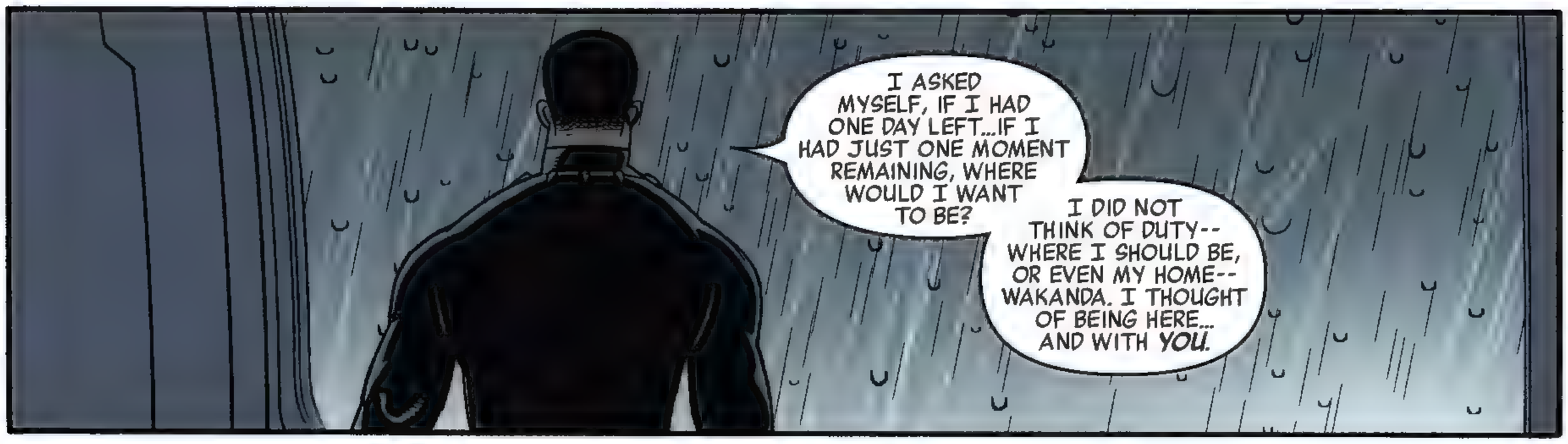
DID YOU DO YOUR BEST, ANTHONY? AND DID YOUR BEST ONLY MAKE THINGS WORSE?
YOUR VAUNTED VIEW OF EVERYTHING--HOW TO BUILD THE WORLD BETTER--WASN'T IT REALLY JUST A BLUE-PRINT OF YET ANOTHER DEATH MACHINE?
I GUESS THE QUESTION NOW IS: HOW DO YOU REVERSE-ENGINEER THE WORKS OF A DEVIL?
OR BETTER PUT, HOW DO YOU GET THE DEMON BACK IN THE BOTTLE?

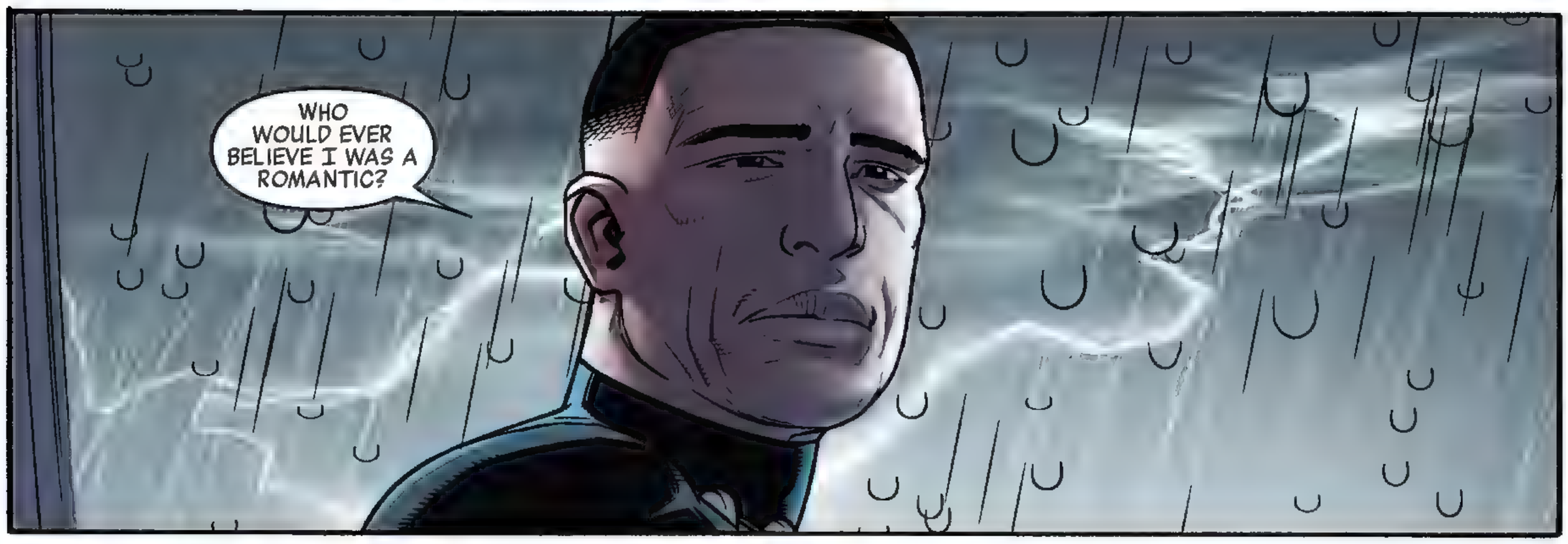
I THINK WE KNOW, DON'T WE?
YOU CAN'T.

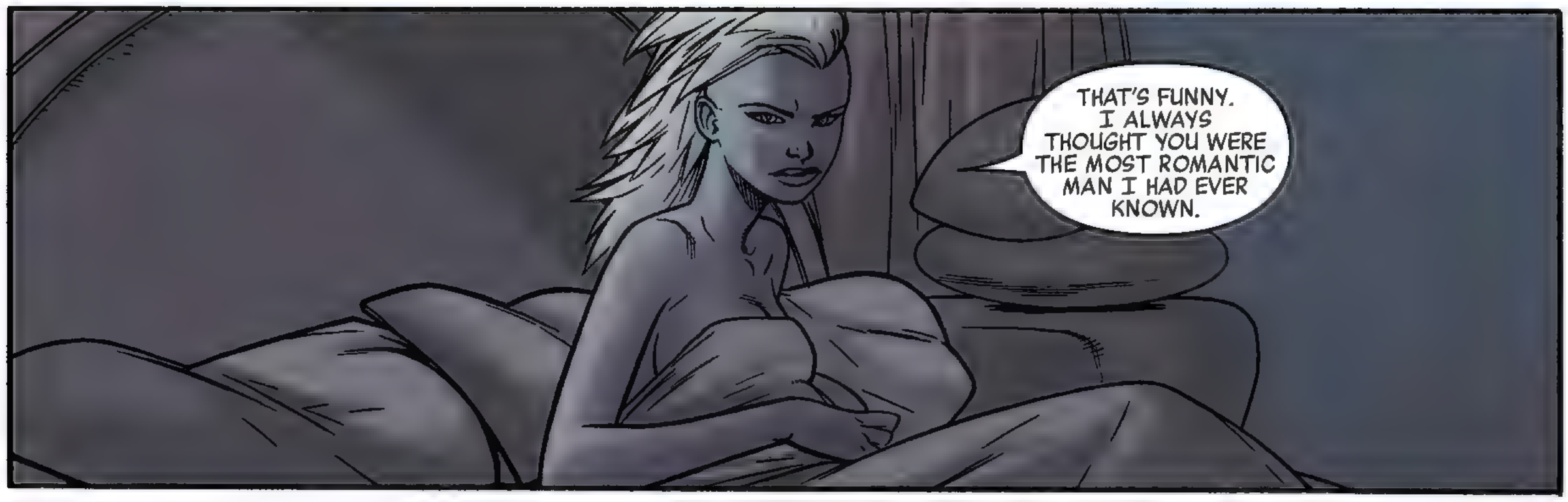

IT WAS ALL FOR NOTHING. YOU FOOLISH, FOOLISH MAN.
YOU GAMBLED EVERYTHING AND LOST.

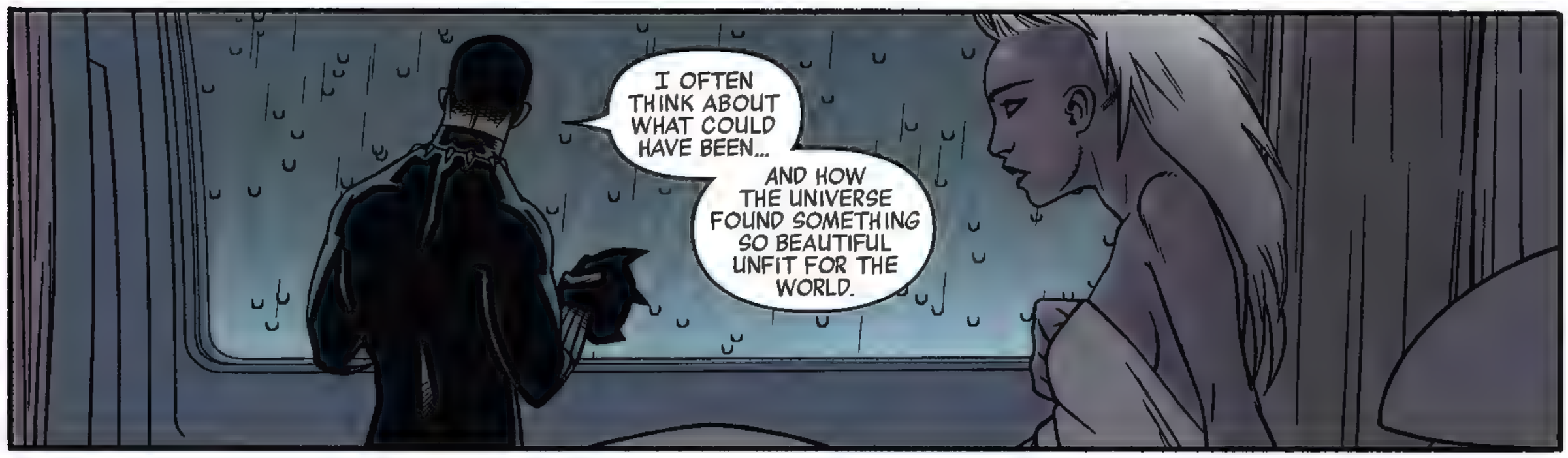

AT LEAST I'M GONNA BEAT YOU.
ONE HOUR UNTIL INCURSION.

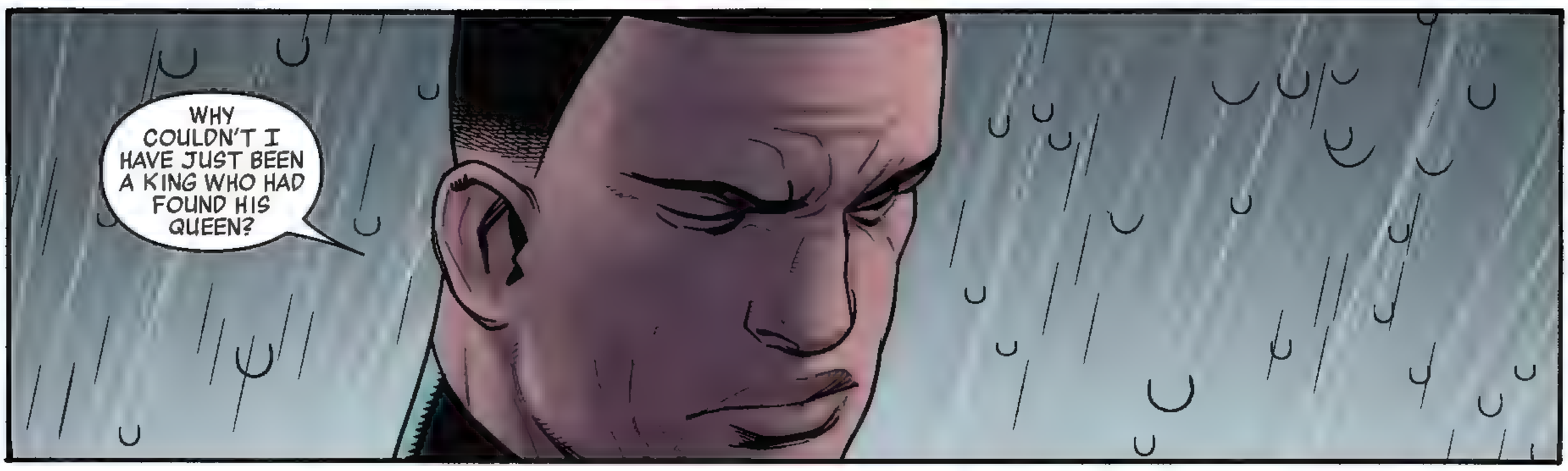

THE JEAN GREY SCHOOL FOR HIGHER LEARNING.
"WHY DID YOU COME HERE, T'CHALLA?"

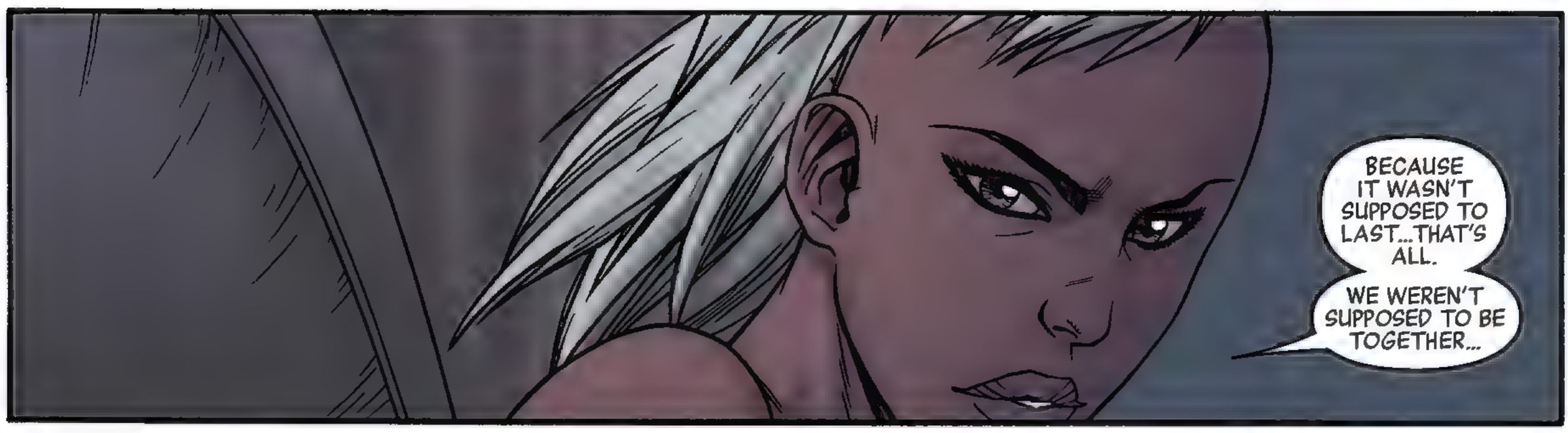

I ASKED MYSELF, IF I HAD ONE DAY LEFT...IF I HAD JUST ONE MOMENT REMAINING, WHERE WOULD I WANT TO BE?
I DID NOT THINK OF DUTY-- WHERE I SHOULD BE, OR EVEN MY HOME-- WAKANDA. I THOUGHT OF BEING HERE... AND WITH YOU.


WHO WOULD EVER BELIEVE I WAS A ROMANTIC?


THAT'S FUNNY. I ALWAYS THOUGHT YOU WERE THE MOST ROMANTIC MAN I HAD EVER KNOWN.


I OFTEN THINK ABOUT WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN...
AND HOW THE UNIVERSE FOUND SOMETHING SO BEAUTIFUL UNFIT FOR THE WORLD.


WHY COULDN'T I HAVE JUST BEEN A KING WHO HAD FOUND HIS QUEEN?

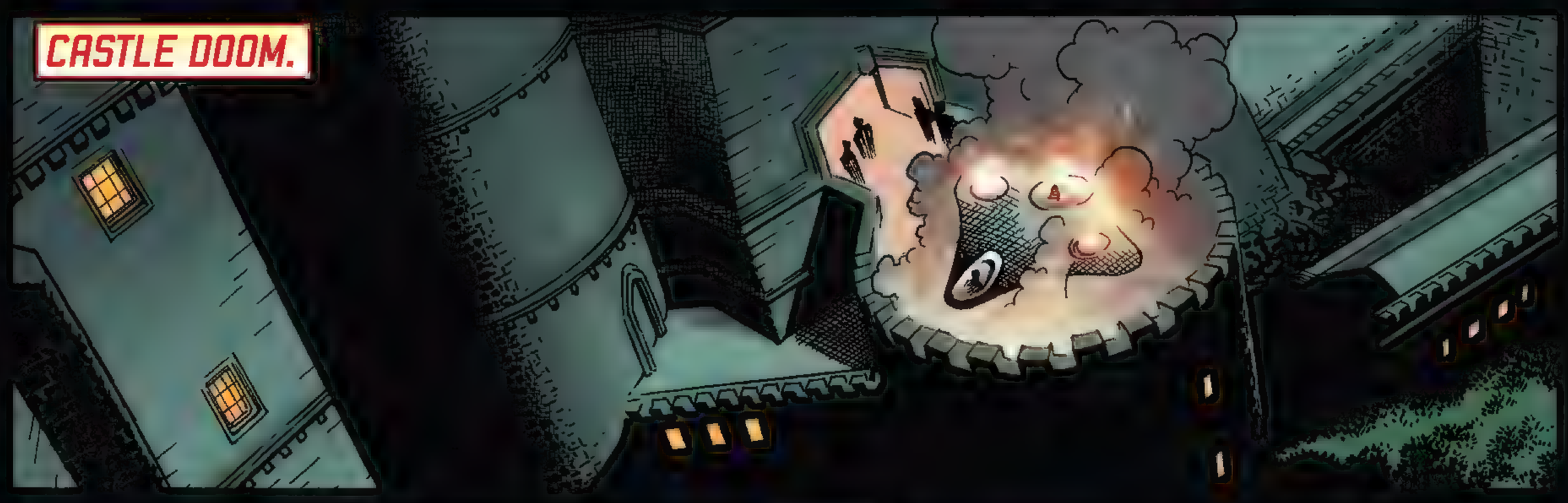

BECAUSE IT WASN'T SUPPOSED TO LAST...THAT'S ALL.
WE WEREN'T SUPPOSED TO BE TOGETHER...

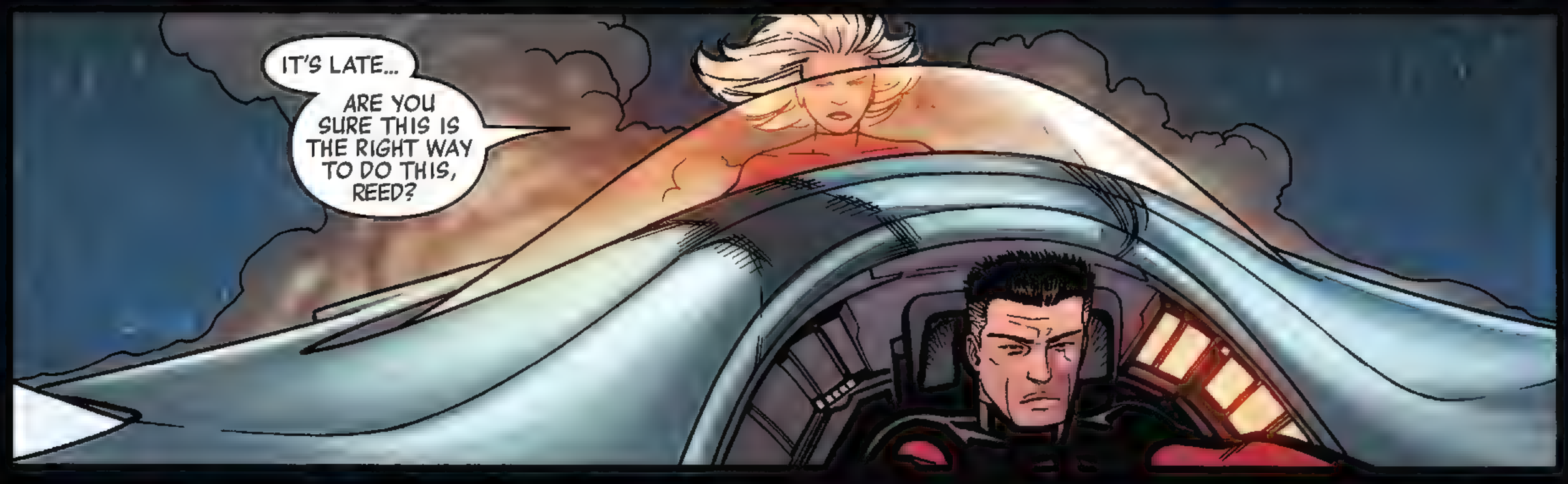
AND I WAS NOT MEANT TO BE A QUEEN--OUR RESPONSIBILITIES ROBBED US OF THAT...OUR CHOICES COST US EVERYTHING.
NOW, PLEASE... YOU SHOULD GO...
THIS WAS A MISTAKE.

I WOULD HAVE LOVED YOU FOREVER...

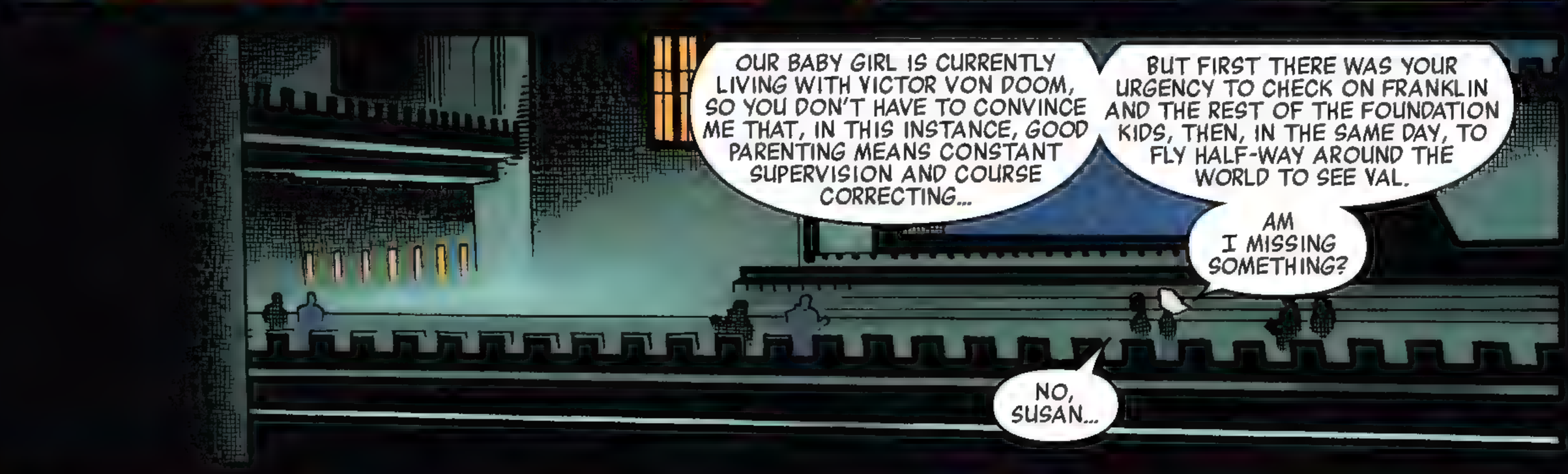
ONLY NOW I KNOW THAT FOREVER DOESN'T EXIST.

BUT YOU, ORORO... YOU WILL ALWAYS BE A QUEEN.
TWENTY MINUTES UNTIL INCURSION.


CASTLE DOOM.


IT'S LATE...
ARE YOU SURE THIS IS THE RIGHT WAY TO DO THIS, REED?

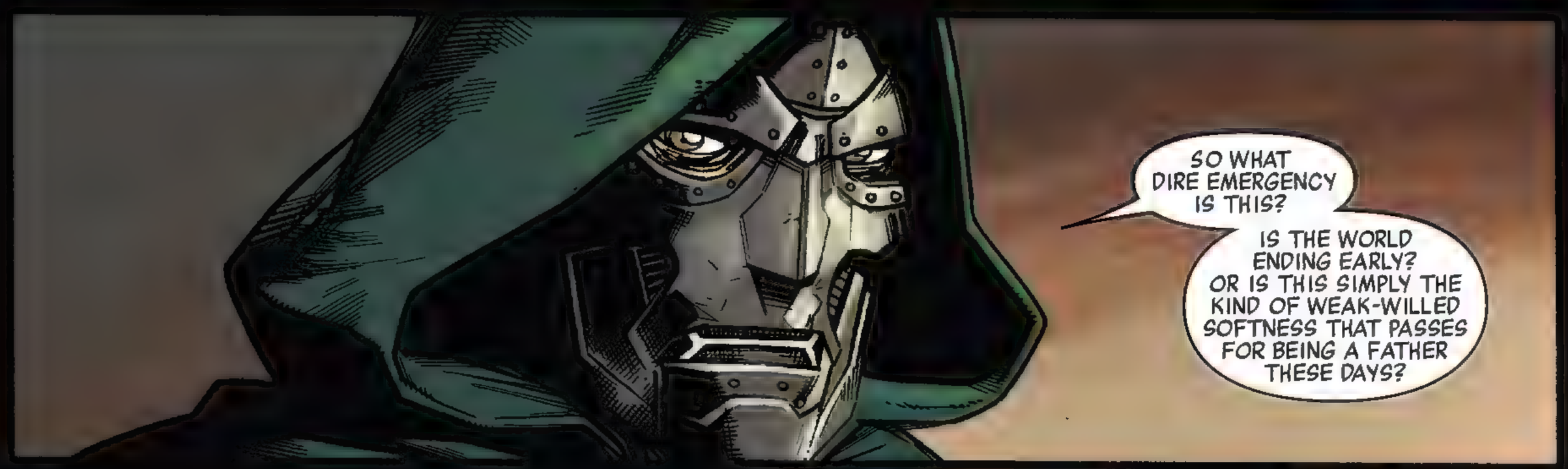
WE AGREED ON A CERTAIN PROTOCOL, SUSAN.
SO I HONESTLY DON'T CARE *WHAT* TIME IT IS-- WE RADIOED AHEAD, GAVE THE PROPER CLEARANCE, AND AGAIN, AS AGREED, FOLLOWED ALL THE FORMS.
NOW I WANT TO CHECK ON *MY DAUGHTER.*


OUR BABY GIRL IS CURRENTLY LIVING WITH VICTOR VON DOOM, SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO CONVINCE ME THAT, IN THIS INSTANCE, GOOD PARENTING MEANS CONSTANT SUPERVISION AND COURSE CORRECTING...
BUT FIRST THERE WAS YOUR URGENCY TO CHECK ON FRANKLIN AND THE REST OF THE FOUNDATION KIDS, THEN, IN THE SAME DAY, TO FLY HALF-WAY AROUND THE WORLD TO SEE VAL.
AM I MISSING SOMETHING?
NO, SUSAN...

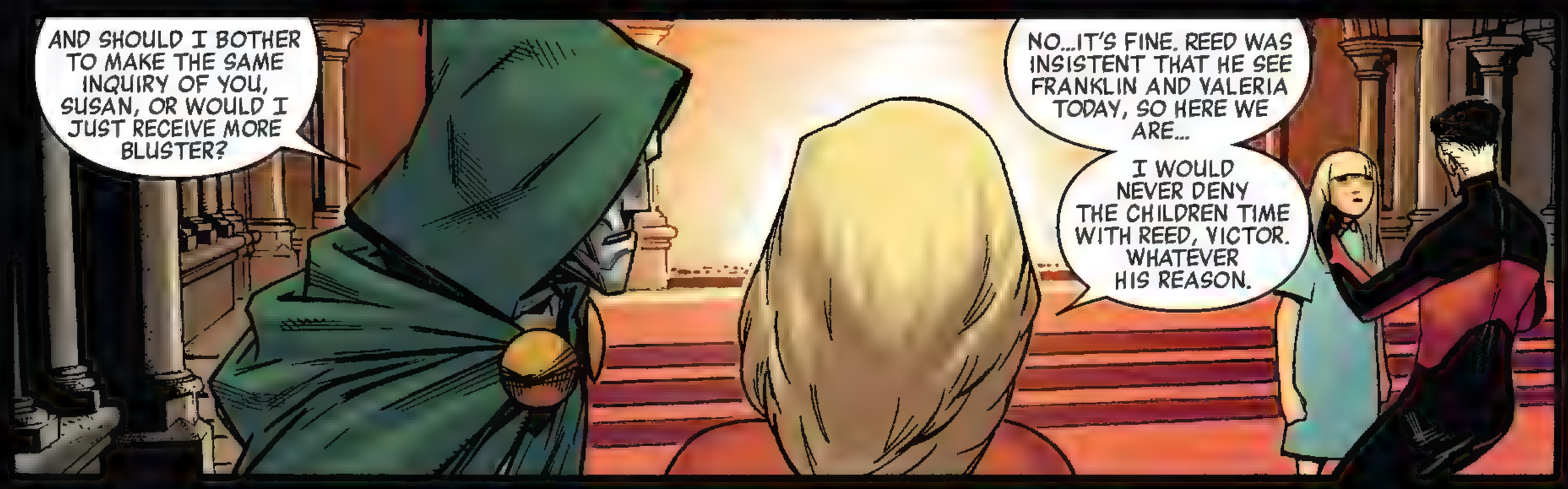
I'M JUST SEEING *ALL* OF MY FAMILY TODAY.

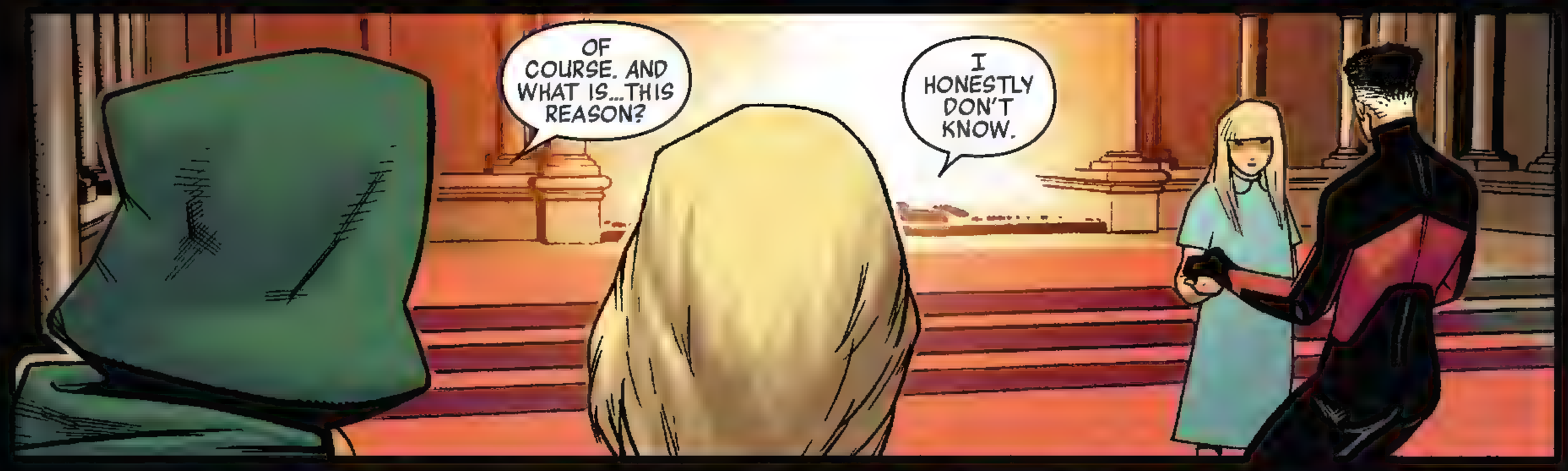
SUSAN, REED...GOOD TO SEE YOU. HAVE TO SAY, WE'RE NOT USED TO SUCH IMPORTANT VISITORS AT THIS HOUR...SO WE'RE A BIT UNPREPARED. IS THERE...
NO NEED FOR POMP, KRISTOFF. WE'RE JUST HERE TO SEE VAL. IS THAT GOING TO BE A PROBLEM?
OF COURSE NOT. THIS WAY...

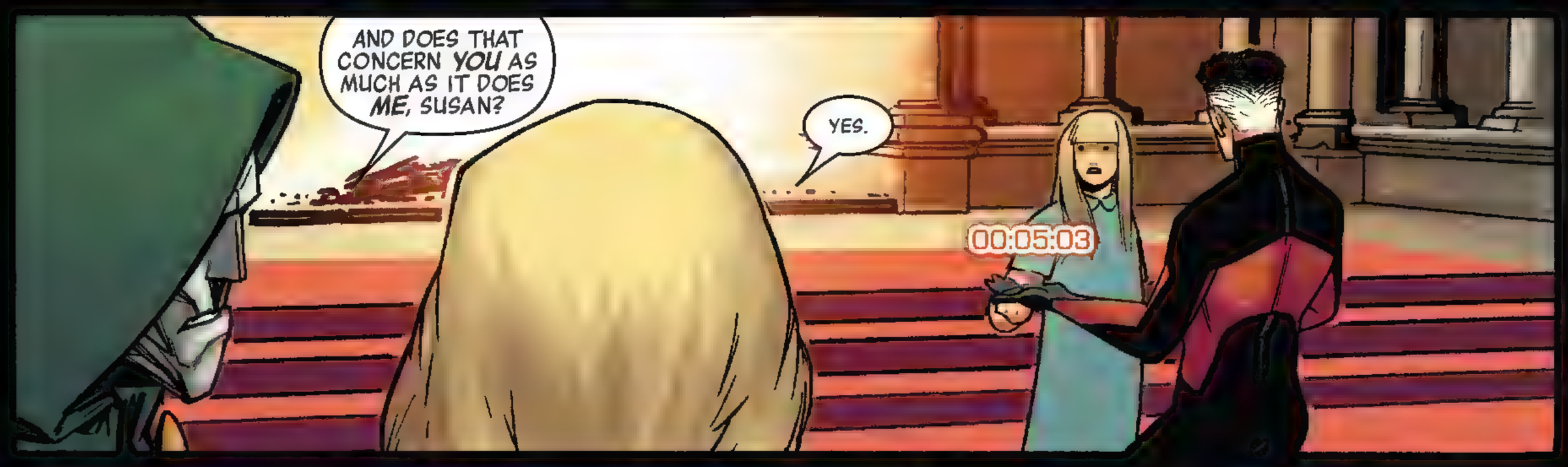
FATHER IS WAITING FOR YOU.
WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS, RICHARDS?
HERE IN LATVERIA, DOOM DEMANDS THAT CHILDREN ALWAYS GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP.
HI, MOM.

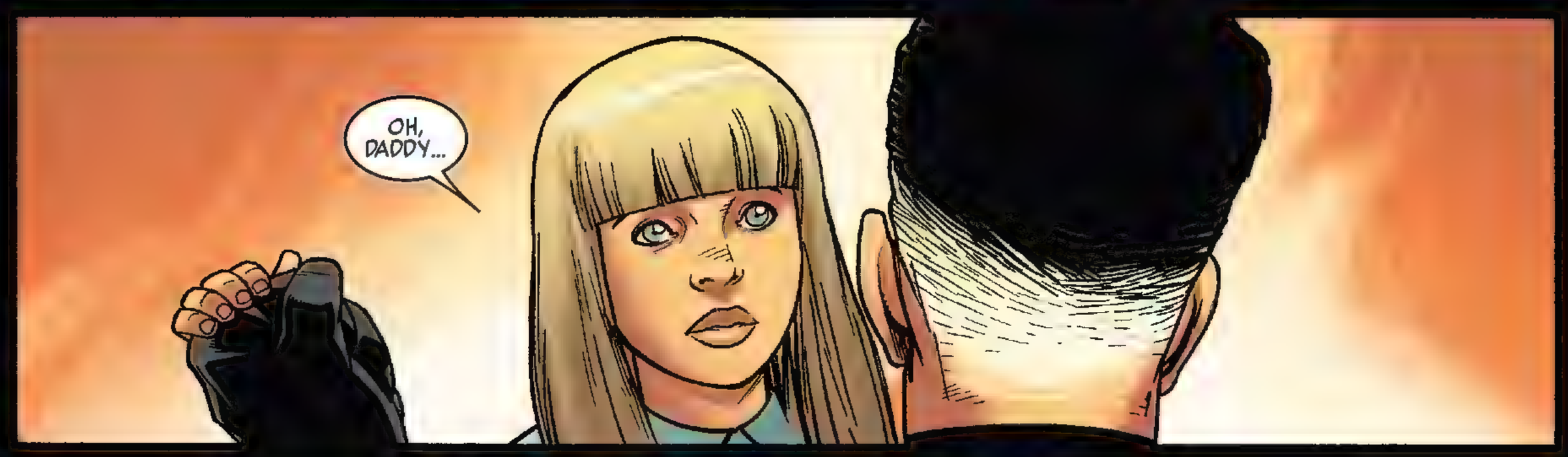

SO WHAT DIRE EMERGENCY IS THIS?
IS THE WORLD ENDING EARLY? OR IS THIS SIMPLY THE KIND OF WEAK-WILLED SOFTNESS THAT PASSES FOR BEING A FATHER THESE DAYS?

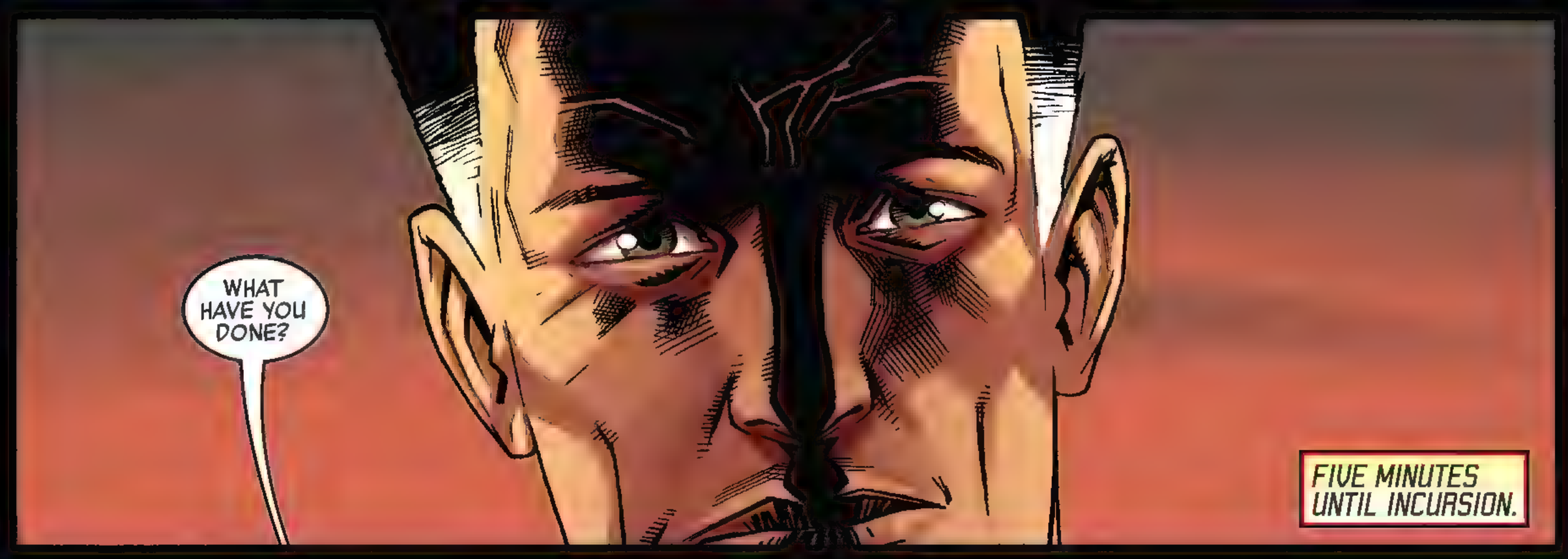
SHUT UP, VICTOR.
HEY, KIDDO... I'VE MISSED YOU.


AND SHOULD I BOTHER TO MAKE THE SAME INQUIRY OF YOU, SUSAN, OR WOULD I JUST RECEIVE MORE BLUSTER?
NO...IT'S FINE. REED WAS INSISTENT THAT HE SEE FRANKLIN AND VALERIA TODAY, SO HERE WE ARE...
I WOULD NEVER DENY THE CHILDREN TIME WITH REED, VICTOR. WHATEVER HIS REASON.

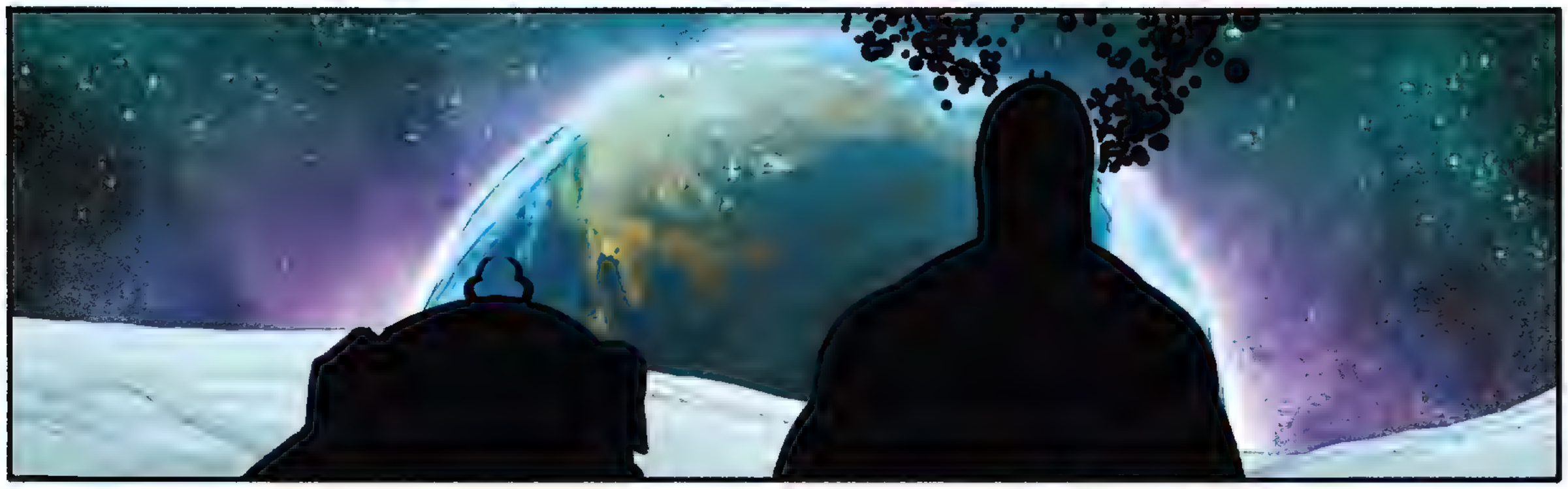

OF COURSE. AND WHAT IS...THIS REASON?
I HONESTLY DON'T KNOW.

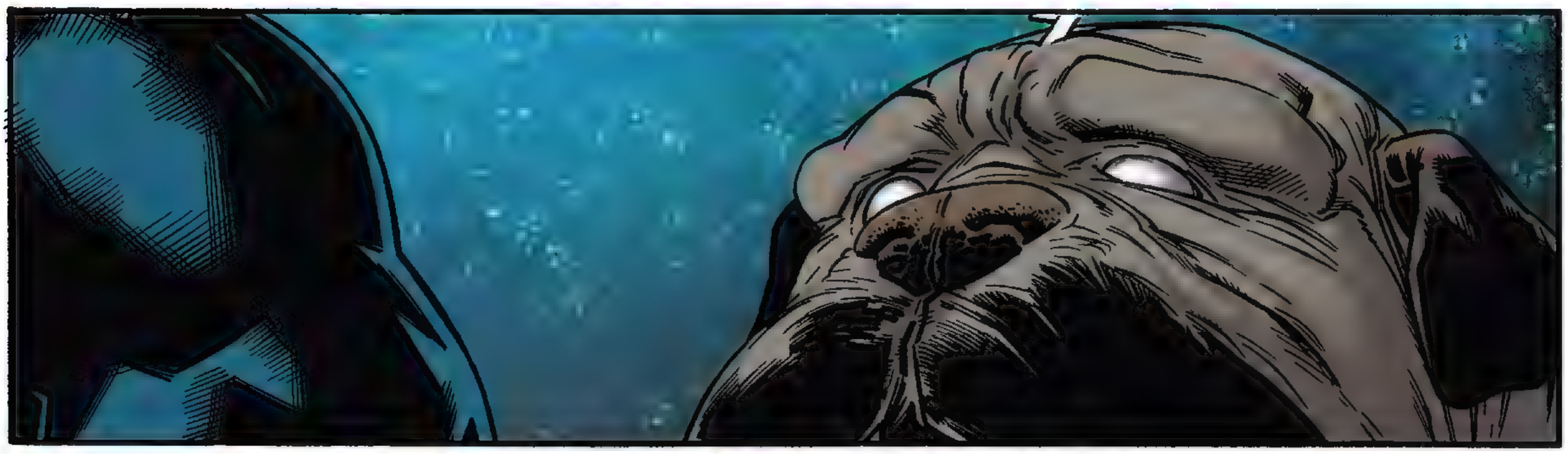

AND DOES THAT CONCERN *YOU* AS MUCH AS IT DOES *ME*, SUSAN?
YES.
00:05:03

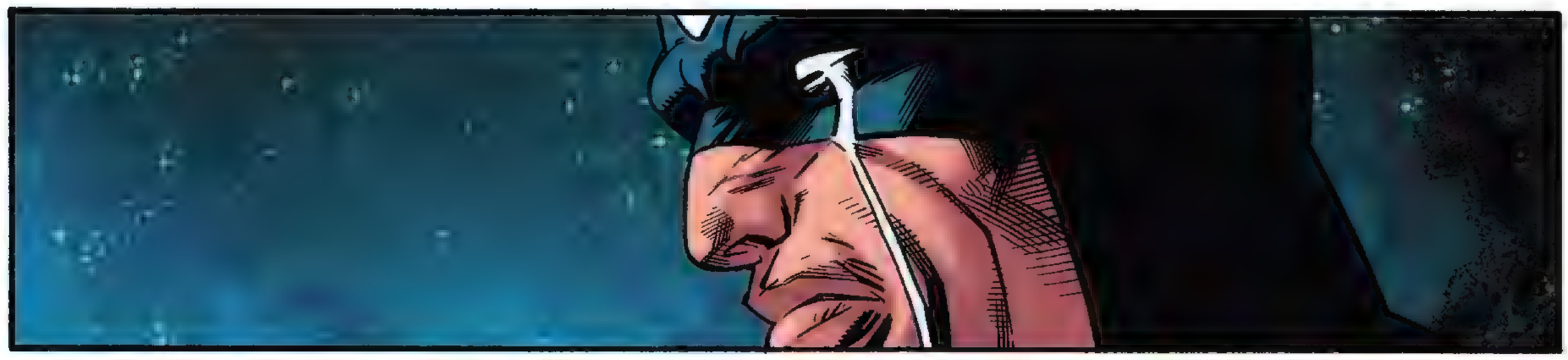

OH, DADDY...


WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?
FIVE MINUTES UNTIL INCURSION.

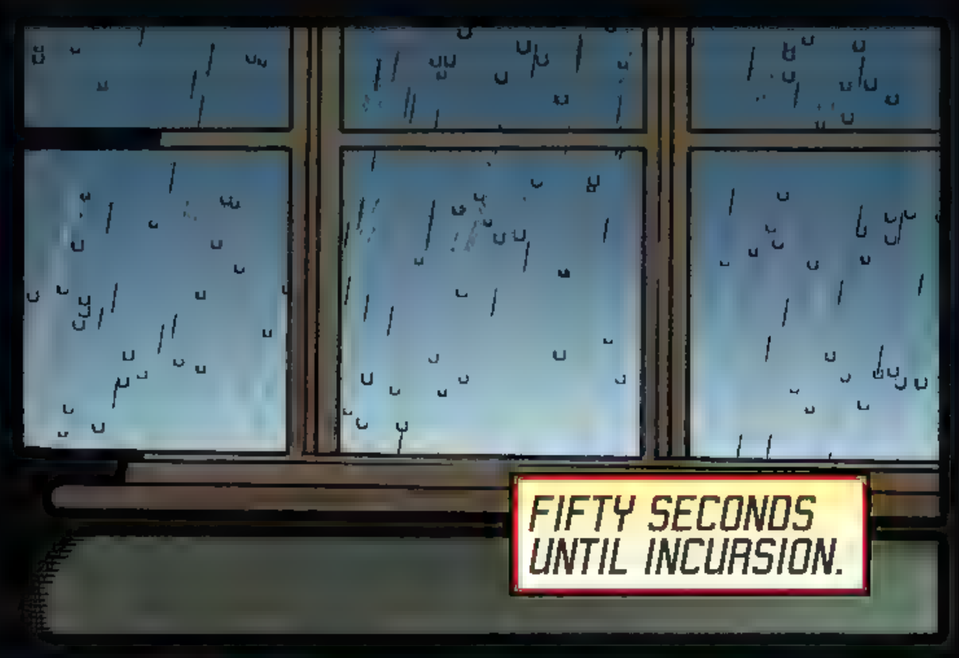
THE BLUE AREA OF THE MOON.

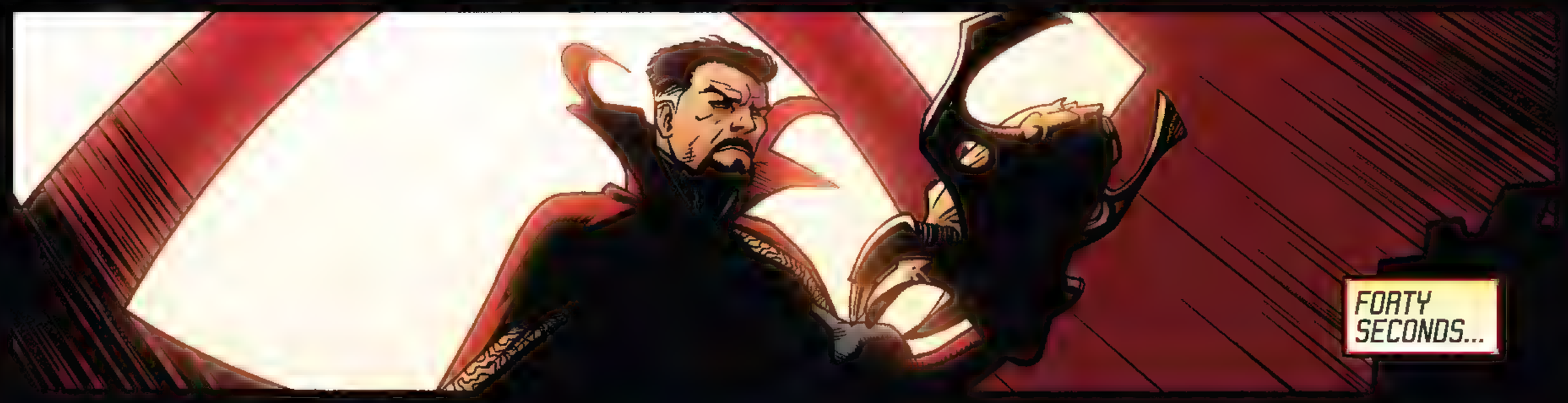


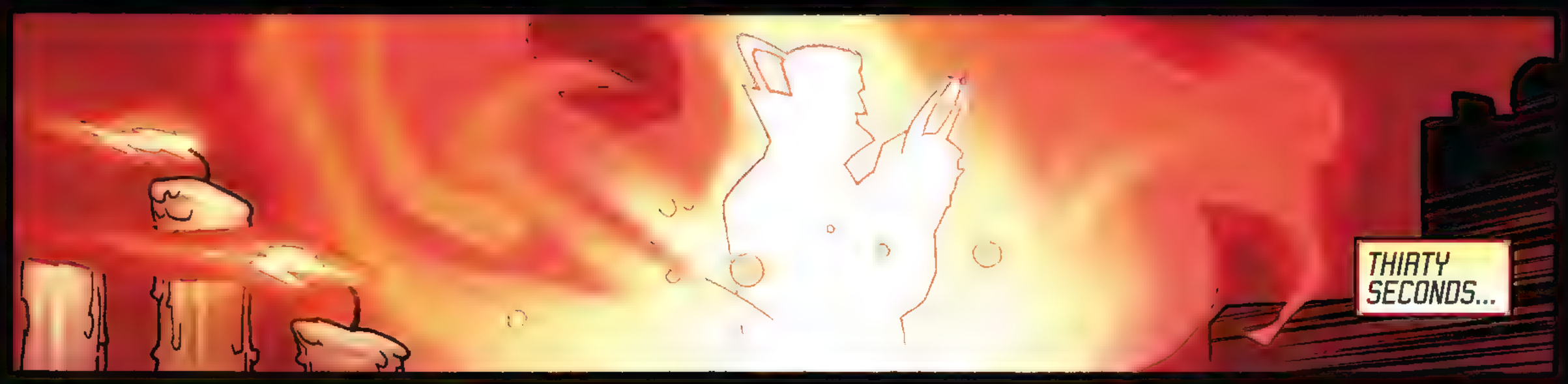




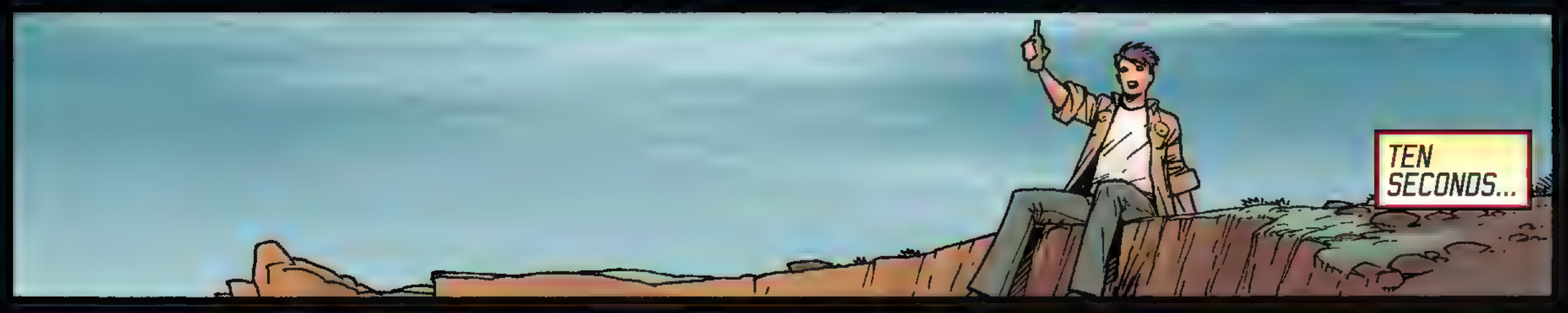
ONE MINUTE UNTIL INCURSION.


FIFTY SECONDS UNTIL INCURSION.


FORTY SECONDS...


THIRTY SECONDS...

TWENTY SECONDS...


TEN SECONDS...

VMMMM
INCURSION.

INCURSION PLUS TEN SECONDS...
INCURSION PLUS TWENTY SECONDS...
INCURSION PLUS THIRTY SECONDS...
INCURSION PLUS FORTY SECONDS...
INCURSION PLUS FIFTY SECONDS...
INCURSION PLUS SIXTY SECONDS...
WHAT THE HELL...?

THE BAXTER BUILDING.
CURRENTLY QUARANTINED.

SOMEONE WANT TO EXPLAIN WHAT JUST HAPPENED?

UH, OR, TECHNICALLY... WHAT DIDN'T HAPPEN.

WHICH I SUPPOSE WE SHOULD ALL BE RATHER GRATEFUL FOR.

IT'S OBVIOUS, ISN'T IT?

WE--YOU--ALL OF US...WERE WRONG.

NO. THAT CAN'T BE RIGHT, BRUCE. WE'VE CATALOGED COUNTLESS INCURSIONS THAT REACHED A TERMINAL POINT. EVERY TIME THE SAME THING HAPPENS.

BEYOND THAT, ALL THE EVIDENCE UP TO NOW SUPPORTED OUR WORKING THEORY.

WELL, IT ONLY TAKES ONE OPPOSING INCIDENT TO DISPROVE THE TOTALITY OF OUR LITTLE HYPOTHESIS, REED.

STILL...I AGREE WITH YOU, THERE HAS TO BE SOMETHING ELSE AT PLAY HERE...SOMETHING WE'RE MISSING...

THERE HAS TO BE, DOESN'T THERE?

I MEAN... OF COURSE THERE IS...THERE MUST BE. BECAUSE IF NOT...

IF NOT...THEN YOU ALL KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS.

IT MEANS WE KILLED...A WORLD...FOR NOTHING!

NOTHING!

NOTHING!

SO, YES...WE HAD BETTER FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED, BECAUSE NONE OF US CAN LIVE WITH THIS IF WE DON'T.
T'CHALLA... MY FRIEND...I FEEL THE SAME WAY...
...BUT IF I'M HONEST, THEN I CAN'T HELP BUT CONSIDER--
BLACK BOLT? WHAT IS...
OH...OH, NO...
OH MY GOD...
WHAT IS IT, REED?
WHAT DID HE SAY?
HE...HE SAID:
"WHERE'S..."

"NAMOR?"

FOUR HOURS AGO.
EVERYTHING DIES.
YOU. ME. EVERYONE ON THIS PLANET.
OUR SUN. OUR GALAXY. AND, EVENTUALLY, THE UNIVERSE ITSELF.
THIS IS SIMPLY HOW THINGS ARE.
IT'S INEVITABLE....
AND I ACCEPT IT.

WHAT I WILL NOT TOLERATE--WHAT I FIND *UNACCEPTABLE*--IS GOING QUIETLY, LIKE SOME MEWLING CHILD, BEFORE MY TIME.
THERE IS SOMETHING OUT THERE, COMING FOR US, TRYING TO KILL US ALL--AND I WOULD DO TO IT WHAT IT WOULD DO TO US.
BROTHERS. SISTERS. ALL THE ANGELS HAVE FALLEN, AND WE DEVILS ARE ALL THAT REMAIN...SO I ASK YOU...
WILL YOU HELP ME *KILL WORLDS?*

RISE, THE CABAL.

EARTH-9004.
NEW AVENGERS

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